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The Soul In the Unseen World

AN INQUIRY INTO THE DOCTRINE OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

BY

R. E. HUTTON

CHAPLAIN OF ST. MARGARET'S, EAST GRINSTEAD
AUTHOR OF "THE CROWN OF CHRIST," ETC.

"While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—ST. PAUL

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PREFACE

THE Shadow of Death falls so frequently across the pathway of life that the thought of "the things that are to come hereafter" is one from which there is no escape.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, says, "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." The Apostle then dwells upon the Second Advent, and the rising again of those who sleep in the dust of the earth. He briefly sums up the joy of the new life in the words, "so shall we ever be with the Lord," and adds, "wherefore comfort one another" (*i.e.* exhort or strengthen one another) "with these words."[1] St. Paul might have dwelt upon other aspects of the life hereafter, such as the meeting again with those whom we have "loved long since, and lost awhile," but he does not do so. He has a profound sense that the Presence of Christ is the supreme need of the soul. Thus he speaks of the soul of the sincere Christian as finding, even before the resurrection, its beatitude "with Christ,"[2] and seeing Him no

[1] 1 Thess. iv. 13–18. [2] Phil. i. 23.

longer "through a glass darkly, but face to face."[1] To be "absent from the body," *i.e.* in the intermediate or disembodied state, is to be "present with the Lord."[2] It is undoubtedly true that in Holy Scripture our thoughts are usually directed toward the life after the resurrection, rather than to the life of the disembodied soul. It is from no forgetfulness of this fact that in the following pages I have endeavoured to trace the growth of belief as to the soul in its intermediate state—between the death and resurrection of the body. The resurrection may be yet far off, the day of death is near at hand, and before many years are gone we must all pass into that Unseen World where so many we have lost sight of are awaiting the end. This certainly makes the subject of the intermediate state to be one of the deepest interest.

If, as Tennyson said, "Knowledge is of things we see," then it is plain we can have no knowledge of the Unseen World. But what the poet said is only true if he allows that the eye of the soul can see and perceive as well as the eye of the body. It has been well said that "we have an organ or faculty for the discernment of spiritual truth, which, in its proper sphere, is as much to be trusted as the organs of sensation in theirs."[3] The vision of the mind—the rational soul—we call "reason," and the illumination of the soul by the revelation of God bestows the light

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [2] 2 Cor. v. 8.

[3] *Christian Mysticism*, p. 6, W. R. Inge, M.A.

of faith. Reason and faith each enable a man to attain to knowledge. Reason is not contradicted, but illuminated, by what we call revelation. The one prepares the way for the other; reason is perfected by faith. By the light of reason the Gentile religions of antiquity were able to arrive at some of the truths of what is called Natural Theology. They believed very generally in the existence of an Intelligent First Cause. This knowledge was not despised by St. Paul, but when he addressed the Gentiles he referred to it, and built upon it. To the Romans he said, "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse,"[1] who do not glorify God. Reason had taught men the existence of God; revelation made Him known as Triune. Reason had led the Greeks to the knowledge of the Fatherhood of God, as St. Paul reminded them, when he quoted certain of their own poets who had confessed, "we are also His offspring."[2] Revelation did but make known how this relationship was perfected in Jesus Christ.

Something of the same sort is true as to the life after death. Reason had led many to the conviction that as there is a God, so in Him all live—not only here, but hereafter. This conclusion of Natural Theology was confirmed and illuminated by the revelation which came through Jesus Christ, "Who hath brought life

[1] Rom. i. 20. [2] Acts xvii. 28.

and immortality (incorruption) to light through the gospel."[1] That which was only dimly seen by the great philosophers of Greece and Rome was made clear by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. He witnessed to the truth that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."[2] To the belief that the soul was not extinguished by the death of the body was added—as far as the Gentiles were concerned—the revelation that death was not for ever to wreck the body, but that it was destined to share with the soul in the new and more glorious life of the world to come. As to the doctrine of the soul in its intermediate state we cannot of course teach, as undoubtedly true, anything that is not supported by the witness of the holy Scriptures. The Bible contains all the elements for a full, clear, and systematic theology; but these elements are scattered throughout various books and letters, much in the same way as the phenomena of natural science are scattered throughout Nature. The great Fathers of the early Church have left us commentaries on Scripture, letters, catechisms, and treatises on special points of doctrine directed against particular errors prevalent in their day; for many centuries, however, there was little or no attempt made to systematise this body of doctrine and show how it formed a coherent whole.

History and experience bear witness to the tendency there is in man to systematise his knowledge, for man

[1] 2 Tim. i. 10. [2] St. Matt. xxii. 32.

is pre-eminently a reasoning being. All departments of learning, taken possession of by the inquirer, are therefore in time reduced to a system. It has been so with astronomy, botany, geology, medicine, chemistry, and all the sciences; so also with ontology, psychology, ethics, political economy, and all the philosophies. Give to men a multitude of facts or theories, and they will begin to analyse their nature and qualities, to arrange and classify, frame other theories, and draw conclusions tending to systematisation and simplicity. To this rule it was impossible that theology should be an exception. Scientific theology is therefore the manifestation of the truths contained in Holy Scripture, in due relation to one another, and as far as possible setting forth their agreement with philosophy.

Starting, therefore, with some brief introductory chapters on the doctrine of the soul, I have endeavoured to trace in the Bible, the Fathers, the Liturgies, and the writings of the theologians, what was commonly believed as to the life of the soul in its intermediate, disembodied state. I have tried to avoid the pitfall of interpreting these documents so as to make them harmonise with my own beliefs. My aim has been to state as fairly and truthfully as I can what the teaching in each part of the Church of Christ has been at various times. The Church as a whole has defined very little as to the after-life, and hence we come across a great variety of opinions on many points. Persons who wish, then, to believe that their own views are those which

have been held "always, everywhere, and by all," are necessarily disappointed when they find at the outset that the Fathers were not agreed among themselves, and that to this day there is no "consent of the Church" upon every detail of doctrine as to the conditions of the intermediate state.

At the present day the eschatology of the Latin Church differs in some respects from that of the Orthodox Church of the East, and the ordinary Anglican teaching differs from that of the Greeks and Latins.

I believe, however, that reason and revelation have led to much the same conclusions—that, in spite of the controversies that still divide the Christian Church, there is a great unity of belief underlying superficial differences of opinion. No doubt these differences of doctrine and practice may be, and often are, so magnified that the essential unity of belief is obscured. For example, all Christians can accept the statement of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians, that "He which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ."[1] It is only when we come to the question where this good work is carried on, by what means the soul is perfected, etc., that controversy begins. And so with "prayer for the dead," as prayer for the departed is often improperly called, the controversy is mainly one of words. If "prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed," then surely

[1] Phil. i. 6

all of us, Catholic and Protestant, do in reality pray for the souls of those we have loved? We all wish them God-speed on their journey home, whether we kneel down and put our desires into words or leave them unexpressed. Prayer is not confined to vocal addresses, but it is the "lifting up of the heart and mind to God." Why, then, should Protestants quarrel with the immemorial custom of the Church—a custom also common to the pre-Christian religions of antiquity—of expressing in vocal prayer the strong desires of her heart for the eternal welfare of the departed? To some such question the reply was lately made, that "there is more need to lead men to imitate Jesus Christ, and walk in His steps, than to pray for the dead." This is one of those statements, begging the question that are popular among the thoughtless. It belongs to the same category as the story of the bishop (said to have been "perhaps the most influential man on the bench"), who peremptorily ordered a certain curate—reported to him for preaching on the subject of prayers for the departed—to "leave the dead alone, and go and do some parish work." We are not told why the preaching of the value of prayers for the departed was, more than any other doctrine, incompatible with "parish work." Such a prelate would doubtless have said to St. Paul, "Leave the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead alone and attend to missionary work." The truth is that—while it is of course possible to unduly dwell upon *any* doctrine—the subject of prayer for the

departed is far from being unfruitful. Apart from the help such prayers may bring to the departed, they serve in a material age to keep the Unseen World and eternal verities constantly before those who are often so absorbed in "work" that they are in danger of forgetting the lesson contained in the Apostle's words, "We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." St. Paul was not a dreamer who neglected "work," nor does the history of the Church of Christ teach us that zealous work for God is the speciality of those who "leave the dead alone."

R. E. H.

East Grinstead,
Feast of St. Margaret, 1901

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A Teacher come from God

"Rationalism has made vain efforts to destroy and to pervert the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is not dethroned; the power of history protects and upholds Him against all these attacks. Therefore rationalism has been forced to attempt a last supreme effort to explain, at least, that life which it has been unable either to destroy or to dishonour. We Catholics explain the life of Christ, we explain the success He has obtained—the greatest of all success, that of producing in minds the rational certainty of faith; in the soul, holiness by humility, chastity, and charity; in the world, a spiritual community, one, universal, and perpetual —we explain it by that single confession—Jesus Christ is the Son of God."—LACORDAIRE.

"Do not believe me because I tell thee things, unless thou receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth." —ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM.

I.

A Teacher come from God

IN the gospel story we read that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, and professed to recognise Him as a "teacher come from God."[1] It would seem, however, that Nicodemus was not prepared to accept without question all that he was taught. He forgot that a "teacher come from God" would almost certainly have much to say that would make demands upon the faith of those who became his disciples. True, the question which Nicodemus asked our Lord, "How can these things be?" might be understood as a request for some further explanation, and not as a refusal to believe; but from our Lord's reply we gather that Nicodemus was wanting in that faith which he ought to have had in one whom he recognised to be a "teacher come from God." "If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"

Without entering into the consideration of the

[1] St. John iii. 1–12.

particular "earthly things" that our Lord referred to, we may learn two lessons from this conversation with Nicodemus. In the first place, if we profess to have found a teacher come from God, we must be prepared to accept on his authority certain truths concerning "heavenly things"—truths that belong to the spiritual world. Secondly, our ability to receive these "heavenly things" will, to some extent, depend on our realisation of the fact that there are "earthly things" which at present we are unable fully to understand, and therefore there may well be mystery in truths that belong to the "Kingdom of God." There are mysteries in the order of Nature that prepare us for mystery in the order of Grace.[1]

The application of this truth to the subject of the life after death is obvious. We can know nothing of "the life of the world to come" except from revelation. We know nothing of that life—not even whether there is such a life—from our own experience, or from the

[1] The word "mystery" is from the Greek *μύω*, meaning "to be shut or closed." The Mysteries were a most important feature in the ancient Greek religion. To those initiated a secret was confided, and they were forbidden to reveal it to the general public.

Probably it was of a character to suggest that more than was understood lay hidden in the secret. It was spoken, as it were, through closed lips (*μύζω*) to the one initiated (*μύστης*), and the ceremonies, therefore, of initiation were *τὰ μυστήρια*—the Mysteries. The word does not occur in the purely Hebrew Old Testament Scriptures, except once in the deutero-canonical book "Ecclesiasticus." In the Alexandrian Greek book of "Wisdom" it occurs, and is frequently used in the New Testament. To the Christian the initiation is by Baptism. Our Lord said to His Apostles, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries

experience of those we have met. Science can tell us neither whence life comes nor whither it goes. The facts of what is called "Spiritualism" are so confused, and so mixed up with imposture, that they can form no sure foundation whereon to rest a well-founded confidence that there is a hereafter. Failing then to find any sufficient witness in the natural order for the existence of a future life, we ask, Is there any witness whom we are justified in listening to as a "teacher come from God"? Is there one who can truthfully say, "Yes, the life of the world to come is no vain dream. There is a hereafter; a spiritual world that 'flesh and blood'[1] cannot inherit, but which is, nevertheless, the home prepared for the children of men. I speak that which I know, and testify that I have seen"? As Christians we answer without hesitation that we believe Jesus Christ to be such a teacher.

We are not now concerned with the proofs upon

of the kingdom of heaven." St. Paul writes to the Romans of the teaching of Jesus Christ as "the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest" (xvi. 25).

A "mystery" is therefore a truth or fact partially hidden. What is revealed leads to the knowledge that there is more which is beyond our understanding. The word "mystery" in the Bible is used invariably in the Greek sense, and is part of the "pagan residuum," since it depends on the pagan Mysteries for its full meaning. See GROTE'S *History of Greece*, part i. chap. i.; *Myths of Aryan Nations*, book ii. sec. ii. chap. xii.; DÖLLINGER, *The Gentile and the Jew;* HATCH, *Influence of Greek Ideas*, etc.; and Dr. LIDDON'S Sermon on *Stewards of the Mysteries of God*.

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 50.

which our belief in Jesus Christ is based. "Christian Evidences" form a special branch of Apologetic Theology. We must here take for granted—what is admitted by all Christians — that our Lord is not merely "a teacher come from God," but that He is nothing less than God Incarnate—the Truth as well as the Way and the Life. It will, then, be allowed that whatever Jesus Christ has taught about a future life is true. The only question is, How can we know what His teaching is?

If we seek to learn what any of the great men of antiquity taught we naturally refer to their writings or to those of their disciples. Without these we should have nothing but the vaguest tradition to go upon. Jesus Christ, however, as far as we know, left no writings at all. The answer, therefore, that Christians will give to the question, How are we to know what Christ taught? takes a twofold form. Sometimes it is replied that our knowledge comes through the teaching of that Society which Jesus Christ founded—the Church; and sometimes, that we learn His doctrine from the study of the New Testament. A moment's consideration is sufficient to convince us that we have here not two distinct witnesses but a twofold aspect of the same witness. The New Testament was not written by Jesus Christ Himself, but is composed of a variety of documents written by those who were His disciples, and by the first pastors of His Church. The New Testament is therefore the product of the Church. It is her own

work, her own book, though none the less the Word of God. It is only through the tradition of the Church that we know what Books are part of the sacred Canon.

In other words the New Testament is nothing else than the teaching of the Church committed to writing —not systematised, but scattered throughout the sacred pages. It is then from the Church alone that we can really learn anything of the inner life and doctrine of Jesus Christ. The Church comes to us as an ambassador from her Lord, and gives the sacred Scriptures into our hands. We study these writings and learn from them that, when they were written, it was part of the teaching of the Church that her message was full and complete from the first; that her office was not to reveal fresh truths, but to explain, unfold, and elucidate a deposit of truth committed to her keeping by her Founder; and further, that God had so ordered it that all truths contained in this deposit should be also set forth in these New Testament Scriptures.[1] Whatever the Church taught should always be capable of proof from these writings, so that what was not con-

[1] "The Church may not require 'as necessary to salvation' what is not read in Holy Scripture, or may be proved by it. This only implies the historical fact, that the same body of saving truths which the Apostles first preached orally, they afterwards, under the inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, wrote in Holy Scripture, God ordering in His Providence that in the unsystematic teaching of Holy Scripture all should be embodied which is essential to establish the faith. This is said over and over again by the Fathers." (*An Eirenicon*, E. B. PUSEY, D.D.)

tained in these Scriptures could never be the teaching of the Church, but merely the doctrine—well or ill-founded—of certain of her members. Hence from the first the axiom was accepted, *Ecclesia docet; probat Scriptura.* The Church teaches, Scripture proves. The fact that the Church has existed from the time of the Apostles is as capable of proof as any other fact of history.[1] The fact that "inspiration," in the strict sense of the word, ceased at the death of the Apostles and those associated with them in the foundation of the Church, is gathered from the tradition of the Church, and witnessed to by the close of the Canon of Scripture at the time of their death. The successors of the Apostles never attempted to add their writings to those of the canonical Scriptures; neither did they claim the power to add new articles to the Faith "once delivered unto the saints."[2] The post-apostolic Church was to witness to the deposit she had received from the inspired Apostles. The Apostles themselves had been instructed by their Lord, and on the day of Pentecost they received a miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit for the very purpose that they might recall to mind all that they had been taught, and understand its full significance and its application to the needs of the souls of men. Those who, like St. Paul, had not been disciples of Jesus Christ were called by God Himself to

[1] The fact that Jesus Christ lived and was crucified we know from Pagan as well as Christian sources.

[2] St. Jude 3.

share in the founding of the Church, and the fact of their having this call was witnessed to by the evidence of miraculous power and by the consent of the apostolic college. The gift of personal inspiration ceased at the death of the Apostles, with other gifts that had been granted for the purpose of founding the Church. Inspiration, in the technical sense of the word, was no longer needful when the whole cycle of the faith had been declared. Miracles were superseded by the witness of the enduring force that enabled the apparent weakness of the Church to triumph over the opposing power and wisdom of imperial Rome. Men might not know whence this mysterious force came or whither it tended, but they were compelled to recognise its presence, for the signs of it were constantly before their eyes. The Apostles knew that this power came to them from their crucified, risen, and ascended Lord. It had come upon them suddenly, accompanied by "a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind."[1] The hearts of men were bowed as this all-subduing breath of God swept over them and filled them with a new life. The words of the Master were verified before their eyes: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth:

[1] Acts ii. 2.

so is every one that is born of the Spirit."[1] Thus, as time went on, the new life of the children of the kingdom of God became its own witness to a divine force that just at the first had proclaimed its presence by those wonders that men call "miracle."

The Church, then, is not an oracle to which men may seek for an answer to every curious question they wish to ask. What she has had to declare is the old Faith, to which she can add nothing because nothing new has been revealed to her. A new revelation would require the witness of fresh miraculous power, as well as the witness of the effect of the new truth upon the life of the Church. In theory, therefore, it is confessed by every portion of the Church that nothing can be added to the original deposit of truth. But, from the first, the Church has reckoned some doctrines as of far greater moment than others. The entire Church declared at the Council of Ephesus in the year A.D. 431 that, "No person shall be allowed to bring forward, or to write, or to compose any other Creed besides that which was settled by the holy Fathers who were assembled in the city of Nicæa, with the Holy Spirit. But those who shall dare to compose any other Creed, or to exhibit or to produce any such to those who wish to turn to the acknowledgment of the truth, whether from heathenism or from Judaism, or any other heresy whatsoever, if they are bishops or clergymen, they shall be deposed, the bishops from their episcopal office, and the clergymen from the clergy, and if they be of the laity they

[1] St. John iii. 6–8.

shall be anathematised."[1] This decree of the Œcumenical Council of Ephesus was reaffirmed by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. The dogmatic decrees of the undoubted Œcumenical Councils — held before the separation of East and West—are binding upon the whole Church, and have been repeatedly referred to as authoritative by the post-reformation Anglican Episcopate. They are, moreover, recognised by the statute law of England where it is written: "Provided always and it be enacted by the authority aforesaid, that such persons . . . shall not in any wise have authority or power to order, determine, or adjudge any matter or cause to be heresy but only such as heretofore have been determined, ordered, or adjudged to be heresy by the authority of the canonical Scriptures, or by the first four General Councils or any of them, or by any other General Council wherein the same was declared heresy by the express and plain words of the said

[1] In this decree there is a point of some importance that is lost sight of in the English version, but is clearly marked in the original Greek. In the sentence "those who dare to compose any *other* creed" the word used for "*other*" is ἑτέρος not ἄλλος. The word ἑτέρος means "other" in the sense of *unlike, opposite*, not "other" (ἄλλος) in the sense of a duplicate creed, *i.e.* one expressing the same truths in other words. Hence the Athanasian Creed does not transgress the decree of the Council, since it adds nothing new to the Nicene Creed; it is not "another" in the sense of being opposite to or unlike the Nicene; it merely develops and explains the truths of the Nicene Creed. See Galatians i. 6, 7, where the two words are used: "I marvel that ye . . . unto another (ἕτερον) gospel: which is not another" (ἄλλο), *i.e.* "there cannot be two Gospels, and as it is not the same it is no Gospel at all," as Lightfoot explains. See Dr. Lightfoot's comment on the passage in his *Epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians.*

canonical Scriptures . . ."[1] At the Lambeth Conference in 1867 the authority of the Councils was referred to in these words: "We, Bishops of Christ's Holy Catholic Church . . . do here solemnly record our conviction that unity will be most effectually promoted by maintaining the faith in its purity and integrity—as taught in the Holy Scriptures, held by the Primitive Church, summed up in the Creeds, and affirmed by the undisputed General Councils. . . ." It is, therefore, no assertion of private judgment that leads us to reject new dogmas.[2] The divisions of Christendom hinder the meeting of a General Council, and consequently the "definition" of any new dogma -- however plainly it may be taught in Holy Scripture—is impossible. The "one Faith," as far as it has been explicitly "defined" by the whole Church, is therefore contained in the Creeds. The articles of the Creed are few in number but of supreme importance, since they guard the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, and the Incarnation. Our Lord Himself taught the need of faith in these fundamental truths when He said, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent." But beside this body of what we may well call essential truth, there are many doctrines capable of proof from the holy Scriptures and witnessed to by the unbroken tradition of

[1] 1 Eliz. i. 36.

[2] A truth contained in the Creed is in modern theological phraseology said to be *de fide definita*—a defined dogma.

Christendom[1] that must have a claim upon our faith. When we apply what has been said to the doctrine of a future life we find that all that is binding upon our acceptance under pain of heresy is the statement in the Creed, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."

It is clear, therefore, that by far the greater part of our inquiry into the future life will be in the department of revelation that lies outside the region of dogma. The Church has settled little or nothing. We have then a perfect right to explore for ourselves the teaching that may fairly be gathered from the written Word of God, and see how far the popular beliefs prevalent in the Christian Church are supported by the holy Scriptures.

Moreover, outside the tradition of the Church and the teaching of Holy Writ there is that body of doctrine that has come down to us from the enlightened reason of pre-Christian antiquity. The traditions of Judaism and the mythologies of Paganism were, we believe, part of the preparation of the world for the reception of the Gospel. We cannot afford to neglect these foregleams and anticipations of the truth, since they are in many ways bound up with the teaching and terminology of the holy Scriptures. They, moreover, often furnish the only answer there is to the question as to what impression was conveyed to the hearers by the words of our Lord and the Apostles.

[1] A truth contained in Scripture but not in Creeds is said to be *de fide definibili*, a dogma capable of definition.

When reason is found to have arrived at beliefs very similar to those made known by revelation, we cannot but feel that our faith is greatly strengthened.

In a very marked degree men of science have found that progress can only be made by continually looking back to the past. It has been well said that advance in natural science means a fuller realisation of Newton's great principles; that progress in philosophy means, "back to Kant," and in politics, "back to Aristotle."[1] It is equally certain that progress in theology must mean, "back to the Bible," since the sacred Scriptures are the unchanging depository of unalterable truth "once delivered to the saints." We have greater helps to assist us to the exact meaning of the sacred Text than our forefathers possessed, and it is in this careful weighing of the words of the Bible that we may hope for any fresh light along the dark paths of the Unseen. Jesus Christ speaking through His Church is, we believe, our "teacher come from God." The fact that there is "a life of the world to come" He plainly asserts, and we accept His teaching as absolutely final. For any knowledge of the conditions of that life we must refer to the less clear doctrine contained in parables, conversations, and the apostolic Epistles, trusting to the promised help of that Holy Spirit Who "spake by the prophets," and Who guided the Evangelists and the writers of the rest of the New Testament.

[1] *Study the Sources*, HERDER.

II.

Body, Soul and Spirit

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7).

"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace. For though they be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality."

But "the hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest, and passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but a day" (Wisdom iii. 1–4; v. 14).

II.

Body, Soul and Spirit

"WHAT is man, that Thou art mindful of him?"[1]

The Psalmist turns from the contemplation of the beauty and the magnificence of the inanimate creation to the thought of the apparent littleness and insignificance of man.

The heavens seem to him worthily to witness to God as their Maker; the silent voices of the stars are eloquent in their praise of the power and wisdom of the Creator. But man? What is man that God should be mindful of him, since man alone constantly departs from the obedient service of God? "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that Thou visitest him?" The question leads the Psalmist towards the answer. Man, if he has affinity with the inanimate and animate world around him, has also something in common with those pure Intelligences who hold a place above man and below God. "Thou madest him lower than the angels"—

[1] Ps. viii. 4.

lower, that is, than those purely spiritual beings that rank above man because they are not linked with matter, and are yet far below God since they, like man, are creatures, and owe their existence to God, the almighty Creator of all things visible and invisible. But if man is "lower than the angels," he is evidently placed above all the other forms of created being. God has made man lower than the angels, only that He may "crown him with glory and worship" upon the earth. "Thou makest him to have dominion of the works of Thy hands, and Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, and whatsoever walketh through the paths of the seas." This excellence of man is implied by the fact that he not only sums up all the lower degrees of life in his own being, but has faculties that are peculiarly his own, and that far transcend the powers of the brute creation.

By his material body man is united with the inanimate earth on which he walks; by the possession of life he is linked with the vegetable kingdom; and by his sensitive soul he shares in the life of the brutes. But over and above these lower forms of life man has mental endowments of a very high order; his soul is not only sensitive, but also rational. Now the question is naturally suggested, Has man by his reason and memory and other mental phenomena something in common with a form of being that is

purely spiritual, and with God, the "Father of spirits"?[1]

Whom shall we ask to answer such a question? If we listen to the enlightened reason of mankind, from the dawn of history down to the present day, we shall be told that in man there is something—call it soul, spirit, or what name we will—that lifts him above all other forms of being of which we have any experimental knowledge, and places him in relationship with pure Intelligences of a spirit world, and with God Who is Spirit.

If we turn to the religious beliefs of mankind we find that, speaking generally, everywhere and at all times all religions have taught that man is composed of a material body and of some "inscrutable entity" that is called the soul or spirit. In the following pages, however, it is taken for granted that God has made known certain truths by revelation, and that this revelation is embedded in Holy Scripture, summed up in the Creeds, and harmonised and systematised in that body of theology that is held in common throughout the Catholic Church.

It is not of course implied that God has not revealed Himself and made known many truths in other ways. By the order of Nature, by reason, by experience, as well as by the voice of prophets and by the sending of His Son, God has throughout the ages spoken to those who have ears to hear. God cannot contradict

[1] Heb. xii. 9.

Himself, and therefore the less certain voice of human speculation must be prepared to revise its conclusions if at any time they are clearly contrary to some truth declared by a more sure witness. We turn then to the Bible, and ask if it contains any answer to the question, What exactly are we to understand by the human soul? In reply, we are obliged to acknowledge that the Bible does not give us any strict definition of the soul. Its existence is usually taken for granted in Holy Writ, but now and again we come across passages[1] that would, if they stood alone, imply that the soul is merely the principle of bodily life, and therefore entirely dependent upon the body. By far the greater part, however, of the teaching of the Bible speaks of the soul as the spiritual personality of man.[2] The soul or spirit of man is spoken of as the real self, and it is because man is a personal spirit that the Bible represents him as having dominion over all the lower forms of life. The Bible seems to take for granted that the "Ego"—the real self in man—is a spiritual entity that "informs" the physical organism.

This we shall have to touch upon when we come to the consideration of the teaching of the Bible as to the life of the spirit after the death of the body. At present it is enough to say that the holy Scriptures plainly assert the existence of a spiritual soul in man,

[1] *e.g.* "They are dead which sought the young child's life, *i.e.* soul" (τὴν ψυχὴν). St. Matt. ii. 20.

[2] St. Matt. x. 28; xi. 29; xii. 18; xvi. 25, etc.

but do not give a scientific definition of the nature of the soul.

It would therefore be possible, while firmly believing in the existence of a personal spirit in man, to offer no definition of its nature. But we may not forget that what we call revelation does not make the use of our reason superfluous. The truths of revelation are to be expressed—imperfectly, no doubt—in human language, and the intellect is never better employed than when it is occupied with the effort to place the sublime mysteries of God as clearly as may be before the minds of men. Hence we may well believe that God delayed His final message by Jesus Christ until the intellect of Greece had so ripened that it became possible to express the deepest truths—such as the Trinity and Unity of God, and the Incarnation of the Eternal Word—in something like adequate language. What the subtlety of Greek thought thus expressed in language, the universal empire of imperial Rome proclaimed throughout the world. God never employs miracle to do that which may be done by man through the use of those gifts that we speak of as belonging to the natural order, and yet are as truly gifts from God as any that we call supernatural.

It was, then, when "the fulness of the time was come" that God "sent forth His Son."[1] Jesus Christ taught men the truth, but He left it to them to harmonise the truth and to express it in the best language at their command. Bearing this in mind, we are not surprised

[1] Gal. iv. 4.

that the Church has from the very first made use of the stores of learning that were placed at her feet by the conversion of the Gentile world. The prophecy of Isaiah received a new fulfilment: "The forces—the wealth—of the Gentiles shall come unto thee," "ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves."[1] St. Augustine says: "If those who are called philosophers, and especially the Platonists, have said aught that is true and in harmony with our faith, we ought not to shrink from it, but to claim it for our own use."

When, then, we ask for a definition of the soul, we find that from the beginning the Christian psychologists have adopted the definitions of Aristotle, and have borrowed much from Plato. We note this not only in the Scholastic theologians, but in those early writers of whom Melito of Sardis and Tertullian are examples. Thus the soul is defined to be "the first principle of life,"[2] and "the first actualising principle of a physical organised body, having life potentially."[3] Or again, the soul is said to be the "substantial form," or "act" of the body, which brings life to every part of its material subject, constituting one person, which we call *self*—that which we mean when we say "I."

The soul is spiritual, because it is the seat of such

[1] Is. lx. 5; lxi. 6.

[2] "Primum principium vitæ," St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theo.*, pars. i. q. 75, a. 1.

[3] Ἡ ψυχή ἐστιν ἐντελέχεια ἡ πρώτη σώματος φυσικοῦ ζωὴν ἔχοντος δυνάμει, and, ἡ πρώτη ἐντελέχεια σώματος φυσικοῦ ὀργανικοῦ.—Aristotle.

spiritual activities as those of thought, self-consciousness, and will. The subject or seat of these spiritual powers must itself be *spiritual.*

It is a *substance*, by which we understand that which exists *per se*, which subsists in itself independently of a subject of inhesion such as the body.

It is *simple*, because not composed of parts; it has no "extension," it does not occupy space.

It is therefore necessarily *indivisible*, since it is not in any sense composite, or the result of an aggregation of distinct atoms or parts.

It is a *principle*, *i.e.* the source from which something comes, or which produces something or makes it known; thus the soul is the source or principle of life.

We may then conclude that the human soul is a spiritual substance, simple or indivisible, that it is the primary principle of life, which exists *per se* or independently of any union with matter.

The increased facilities for the textual criticism of Holy Scripture that characterise the present day seem to lead Biblical psychologists to conclusions which, if they were eventually accepted, would to some extent alter these definitions that have hitherto been popular with theologians. At present, however, the speculations as to the precise shades of meaning of certain words of the Bible can hardly be said to have proved that such alteration is necessary.

While the holy Scriptures are accepted as containing the true doctrine, materialism must necessarily be

rejected. There have always been men of note who believe the soul to be merely the principle of life, and who deny that it is a spiritual substance in the sense that theologians—pagan and Christian—have attached to the words. They agree with Lucretius, who taught that the "soul is born with the body, grows and decays with the body, and therefore perishes with the body." But these materialists do not pretend that the sacred Scriptures support their doctrine.

The origin of the soul brings us face to face with the great and insoluble mystery that surrounds the origin of all life. At one time it was thought that life in its lowest forms might possibly arise out of inanimate matter, but the development of chemistry and the power of the microscope have proved fatal to the theory of spontaneous generation. Dr. Tyndall confessed that, "no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independently of antecedent life." Professor Huxley acknowledged that the doctrine of biogenesis—life from life— is "victorious all along the line at the present day." As a matter of fact, then, science can offer no explanation of the mystery of life.

The attempted solution of the question, whence life came on our planet, by the suggestion put forward some years ago by Sir William Thompson—that the first life-germ came to us on an aerolite shot from some distant orb—has not only no shred of evidence to support it, but even if it were true offers no sort of

solution of the mystery of the origin of life. The question, whence came the germ of life on the aerolite, leaves the mystery exactly where it was. We must therefore either take up an agnostic position and say we know nothing about the origin of life, or accept the conclusion that enlightened reason has arrived at, that there is a self-existent First Cause, the Lord and Life-giver, from whom life in all its forms has originated.

There have been various theories as to the origin of the soul. The ancient Eastern religions taught that the soul exists before the body, and is sent to inhabit one body after another until it works its way towards emancipation from separate existence, and is absorbed in the ocean of life. Plato in the West taught something of the same kind. According to his theory all souls were called into existence at some remote period, and for some fault a soul is sent to inhabit a body as a punishment. Only such souls as in their pre-existent state have contemplated truth and abstract "ideas" can dwell in a *human* body. It is by reminiscence of the beauties that the soul witnessed before its union with the body that it can hope to rise out of the degradation of incarnation and attain to a purely spiritual existence.

This theory of the pre-existence of the soul influenced many of the schools of thought that sprang up in the early Christian Church. It was, however, always vigorously opposed by the great Fathers of the Church, and fell under the condemnation of the second Council of

Constantinople. If we ask why the theory was condemned, the answer is that no shred of proof to support it could be adduced from the holy Scriptures. The same may be said of the theory taught by some of the Gnostic sects and by the Manichæans—that the soul is an emanation from the Divine Being.

Very little is taught as to the origin of the soul in Holy Writ. In the Book of Genesis we read that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."[1] Whatever may be the exact meaning of these words, they certainly imply that the living principle in man is due to some special communication of the divine life, quite unlike anything bestowed upon the brutes. When the beasts of the earth were called into being we read that "God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind";[2] but when man is to be formed "God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness."[3] However figurative this language may be it is simply misleading unless it means that man stands in a unique relationship to God. Man is said to be made in the image of God; he is the visible likeness of the Invisible, and as such he has been given dominion over the lower forms of life upon the earth. "And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the

[1] Gen. ii. 7. [2] *Ibid.* i. 24. [3] *Ibid.* i. 26.

earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

It is one of the simplest commonplaces of Christian doctrine that man's likeness to God is chiefly in the soul. It must be so, since God is Spirit. We conclude, therefore, that the soul of man is a spirit, and that it resembles God in its spiritual personality—its self-consciousness and its moral freedom; that the soul brings life to the body, as God brings life to all creation; that the soul sees, hears, and remembers things long past, while God knows all things, past, present, and to come; that the soul has free-will and affections which enable it to choose and to reject, to love and to hate, while God is Almighty, and has made known that He is Love.

It is of course true that man falls infinitely short of the Divine perfection of which he is the image. The spirit of man can only do imperfectly and in absolute dependence on God, what God does perfectly and of Himself. The question, whether or no the soul is immortal and thus has another point of likeness to the Eternal, is one that will be touched upon in its proper place.

Among other passages of Holy Scripture that speak of the soul as a creation of God we may note the words in Ecclesiastes where—at the death of the body—the spirit is said to return "unto God Who gave it";[1] and the verse in the Epistle to the Hebrews in which God is called the "Father of spirits," and men "the fathers

[1] Eccles. xii. 7.

of our flesh."[1] Again, the prophet Isaiah represents God as speaking of "the souls which I have made."[2] There are some references to man in the Book of Job that seem to repeat the story of the creation as recorded in Genesis. In the thirty-second chapter we read "There is a spirit (πνεῦμα) in [mortal] man: and the inspiration (πνοὴ) of the Almighty giveth them understanding";[3] and in the thirty-third chapter, "The spirit (πνεῦμα) of God hath made me, and the breath (πνοή) of the Almighty hath given me life."[4]

We gather then from reason, as well as from revelation, that, since all life comes from God, so especially must that conscious, personal, spiritual life that differentiates man from the lower animal creation. This life of the spirit comes from God not only as a gift, but as a gift from out of His own Divine Being. All life is God's gift, but the life of the spiritual soul is a gift of the life of God. It is therefore usually believed that each soul is a special creation, and that consequently the soul is not generated with the body. It cannot be said that the Church has ever condemned the Traducianist theory, *i.e.* that the soul is begotten with the body (*ex seminis traduce*), but the weight of orthodox opinion is in favour of Creationism, *i.e.* that

[1] Heb. xii. 9. [2] Isa. lvii. 16.

[3] Job xxxii. 8. Another rendering is, "It is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty, that giveth . . ." In Job xii. 10 we read: "In Whose hand is the soul (ψυχὴ) of every living thing, and the breath (πνεῦμα) of all mankind."

[4] *Ibid.* xxxiii. 4.

the soul is created by God and infused into the body.[1] In Holy Scripture the immaterial part of man is sometimes called the soul[2] and sometimes the spirit.[3] The Greek word for soul is used in the Bible in various senses. Often it stands for the whole immaterial part of man, as in the Book of Revelation where we read of the "souls (ψυχὰς) of them that were slain for the word of God."[4] In other passages of Scripture "soul" is the word used to signify the life of the body,[5] whereas the word "spirit" is used of the Holy Ghost and of purely spiritual beings such as the angels: when it is used with reference to man it usually conveys the idea that man in his innermost being is spirit, gifted with spiritual gifts and brought into relationship with God.[6]

[1] I have gone into all these questions as to the soul much more fully in my book, *The Soul Here and Hereafter.*

[2] St. Matt. x. 28, 29. [3] Eccles. xii. 7.

[4] Rev. vi. 9. It may be that this is merely a figurative expression, and that as "the blood is the life"—so here by "the souls of them that were slain" is meant their life-blood poured out as in sacrifice appealing to God for vengeance. [5] St. Matt. ii. 20.

[6] St. Augustine writes: "There are three things whereof man consists—spirit, soul, and body; which again are called two, because often the soul is named together with the spirit, for a certain reasonable part of the same, which beasts are without, is called the spirit: that which is chief in us is the spirit; next, the life whereby we are joined to the body is called the soul; finally, the body itself, since it is visible, is that which in us is last."—*De fide et Symbolo.* St. Cyril of Jerusalem says: "Know that thou art a two-fold man, consisting of body and soul." See also DELITZSCH, *Biblical Psychology.* Dr. Liddon says: "It cannot be concluded that man consists of three essentially distinct elements. . . . Man's soul is not a third nature, poised between his spirit and his body. . . . It is the outer clothing of the spirit, one with it in essence yet distinct in functions."—*Some Elements of Religion.*

There are not however two souls in man, one merely animal and another spiritual. The soul is one, but it is looked at in a two-fold aspect. St. Paul in one or two passages in his epistles uses language that seems at first sight—but not in reality—to support those who assert that the soul and spirit are quite distinct: "I pray God your whole spirit (πνεῦμα) and soul (ψυχή) and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."[1] The same Apostle makes a similar distinction when he speaks of men as either natural (ψυχικός), or spiritual (πνευματικός), or carnal (σαρκικός):[2] "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things."[3]

Spirit is probably the highest faculty in man—that which is peculiar to man, and enables him to become the recipient of the Holy Spirit. The soul may thus be looked upon at one time as the principle of bodily life, and at another as the principle of rational life by which man is made capable of communion with God. The man whose reason is elevated by faith may well be called spiritual, while the man whose life is merely earthly is fitly called natural, and he who gives himself up to sensuality is rightly spoken of as carnal.[4]

[1] 1 Thess. v. 23. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 3. [3] 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

[4] I have not attempted here to discuss at all fully this subject as to the soul and spirit. These chapters are merely introductory to those that follow, and only aim at stating briefly the doctrine of the soul, before considering what may be thought as to its life after death.

III.

Is the Soul Immortal?

"We have the germ of endless life; and death, like birth, is the starting-point of a new and rapid development, an indispensable transformation like those living organisms which are so marvellously metamorphosed before our eyes.

We carry each one within us a hidden treasure of powers; which surge and eddy here, but will find their vent elsewhere. It is this hidden treasure which death reveals."— PÈRE GRATRY.

III.

Is the Soul Immortal?

THE fact that we have no experimental knowledge of the soul apart from the body has led many in all ages to question the assertion that the spirit lives on after the death of the body. On the other hand, Plato and a multitude of the most intellectually gifted men of antiquity taught that the soul not only survived death but that it lived on eternally.

It would be easy to multiply quotations. The following words that Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates are representative of the tone of the great masters of pre-Christian thought in the West: "When death assails a man, the mortal part of him, as appears, dies, but the immortal forthwith departs, safe and incorruptible, giving place to death. Beyond all else then, is the soul an immortal and indestructible being; moreover, our souls will in reality survive in Hades."[1]

Among the Jews there was no absolute agreement as to the essential permanence of the human soul. The orthodox believed that the souls of the righteous enjoyed hereafter a life of endless bliss, but they varied in their way of speaking of the fate of the hopelessly wicked.

[1] *Phædo*, lvi. 107.

When we come to the Bible it must be confessed that a careful study of its language makes it difficult to say that the essential permanence of the human soul is unmistakably taught in its pages. There is, of course, no question that the holy Scriptures teach that the righteous live for ever, but this eternal life is often spoken of as a special "gift of God," and not as inherent in the nature of the soul. The question is, Does the Bible teach that every soul is by its own nature immortal, or does it lead us to suppose that the soul is in itself mortal, but has immortality placed within its reach on certain conditions? Or, does the Bible—while revealing clearly the fact that the righteous will live for ever—draw a veil over the fate of the wicked, neither affirming nor denying their immortality?

To these questions we must try to find an answer.

Hitherto it has been taken for granted by the orthodox Christian that the soul is immortal, and it has also been thought that the holy Scriptures are perfectly clear on the subject. Of late years, however, men have been paying great attention to the exact meaning of the language of the Bible, and the significance of the words used in the original text of the New Testament.

A very careful and thoughtful modern nonconformist divine writes: "The Christian doctrine of the immortality of the soul, is a unique example of an opinion destitute of any foundation in the Bible and in some measure contradicting it, derived only from Greek philosophy, yet held firmly by large numbers of intelligent Christians

and Christian teachers and writers on the mistaken supposition that it is taught in the Bible. Its prevalence proves how uncertain is the relation between popular religious opinion and the actual teaching of Christ and the Evangelists and Apostles." And in another passage: ". . . the Bible never traces the eternal life offered to the righteous to any intrinsic and endless permanence of the human soul." And once more, "Look at it as we may, if human consciousness will in all cases continue throughout an endless succession of ages, it does so simply and only because this is the will of God. That this is His will we have no proof within or without the Bible. . . . the writers of the New Testament who never assert the essential and endless permanence of human consciousness, and assert frequently that the future life of men is contingent on their present action, never assert that their future existence is so contingent. For to them, life is much more than existence."[1]

It will be seen from these quotations that great care must be taken to gauge the exact meaning of the words used in the New Testament by those who desire to ascertain the precise significance of the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles. The conclusions already quoted are in the main the same as those reached by Delitzsch and the writers of his school. Delitzsch, in his *System of Biblical Psychology*, writes: "Death is . . . the final destiny of the whole man. How

[1] *The Last Things*, by J. A. Beet, D.D.

then is it possible to speak of the immortality of man, or even only of the immortality of the soul? If we understand by the immortality of the soul its indissolubility as the result of its simple nature, the expression does not affirm what we have in view. For that that which is not compounded cannot be dissolved, is self-evident; but is everything which cannot perish in the way of dissolution therefore of necessity eternal? Even if we understand by the immortality of the soul and the spirit their incapability of annihilation, the expression is, to say the least, unscriptural. For death and annihilation in Scripture are not by any means coincident ideas. In general, Scripture nowhere says that anything whatever of what has been created is annihilated; and, so far as our inquiry reaches, we see no atom perish. But, from the nature of things, it by no means follows that God's word of might cannot again transplant into nonentity that which it has called into existence."[1]

This teaching is so unlike the simple popular belief held by all Christians that it requires some careful thought if it is to be understood. The writers who, with Delitzsch, endeavour to base their doctrine on the Bible alone, and who refuse to accept the consensus of Church teaching as the true interpretation of the Bible, seem to hold that the sacred Scriptures imply

[1] Delitzsch distinguishes between "immortality" and the "eternal personal continuance of being of all personal natures." Pp. 473-4 of the second edition translated by the Rev. R. E. WALLIS, Ph.D. (T. and T. Clark.)

that continued self-consciousness is not necessarily part of the continued existence of the soul after the death of the body. They teach that the soul may possibly continue an eternal existence without eternal consciousness. Hence Delitzsch says: "Death, as such, does not, it is true, force man back into absolute nothing, but back within the limit of that nothingness which preceded his coming into being. That man continues self-conscious throughout death, and that it is possible for him to live though he dies, this is the operation of redeeming grace, which, for all who lay hold on it, changes death into life, and permits us sometimes to behold in the countenance of dying persons the bright gleam of heaven opened to them. This redeeming grace has, even for those who reject it, placed a limit to the power of death."[1]

That the soul, apart from the gift of God, is not immortal may be granted, but there is no proof that God only gives immortality to those who accept "redeeming grace." It might appear from the above quotation that Delitzsch denies personal continuance of being to the reprobate, but he does not do so. He writes that at the resurrection the "souls of the ungodly hasten to their bodies, which arise by God's creative mighty operation contemporary with the call,"[2] and asserts that "in hell the *turba* of the ungodly, in that wrathful fire of hell (whereof elementary fire is only a remote created type), sets on fire its natural wheel of life."[3]

[1] p. 472. [2] p. 543. [3] p. 544.

And again, "when the mighty call of God's Son . . . goes forth to those who thus lie in the graves, then, as in the Old Testament God's angel said to Daniel, shall the many who sleep under the earth awake, some to everlasting life, some to everlasting disgrace and shame."[1]

It would seem, therefore, that the school of writers referred to insist upon the uncertainty in the teaching of the New Testament as to the essential permanence of the consciousness of the soul. The wicked, they appear to teach, *may*, as far as the Scriptures are concerned, so far fall under the dominion of death as to forfeit, or not gain, that eternal consciousness which is bestowed as a "gift of God" when it will conduce to the happiness of the soul. These authors do not however venture to assert that this doctrine is clearly taught in Holy Writ, but that Holy Scripture is patient of such an interpretation. There is much to make us wish the doctrine might be true, but there is also not a little that makes it very doubtful. It seems not very unlike the older belief in conditional immortality, which involves the annihilation of the wicked.

The fact that the popular belief within and without the historical Church is opposed to any form of conditional immortality does not necessarily prove the doctrine to be false, but it shifts the *onus probandi* upon those who maintain the doctrine. The Church has never defined, we believe, what is meant by everlasting damnation, so that if it could be proved that the Bible does not teach the everlasting permanence

[1] p. 569.

of human consciousness, the Church might interpret the Bible to teach that the wicked are body and soul literally destroyed and consumed after the final judgment. But the most careful consideration of Holy Scripture and of all the arguments hitherto put forth in defence of conditional immortality fail (in the opinion of many who are desirous to believe the doctrine) to meet the difficulties of the case. There are passages of Scripture that are opposed to conditional immortality, and these, taken in connection with the unfailing tradition of Christendom as to the meaning of the Bible, make it at present well-nigh impossible to accept the doctrine. Those who accept the Bible cannot entirely ignore the Scriptural office of the Church.

The Church was fashioned by Jesus Christ to be our teacher, and, although she must show by Holy Scripture that she is teaching no new doctrine, she is certainly entitled in a question of interpretation of Scripture to say in what sense she has always understood the words of her Lord and the writings of His Apostles. It is of course perfectly true that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was taught as a part of Greek Philosophy, but on that account it became imperative that our Lord should plainly condemn the doctrine if it were false. The doctrine could not be ignored. If, on the contrary, His words seemed to those who heard them to sanction the belief, and if our Lord knew that His teaching would lead His Church to believe that the soul is immortal, we can

only suppose that the doctrine is true. Those who deny that it is plainly taught in Scripture may be right as far as the literal content of certain words is concerned, but they must confess that the whole tone of the teaching of the New Testament—as addressed to many who already believed the soul to be immortal—is most misleading.

In defence of the doctrine that the soul is in every case gifted with immortality, and that the condition in which this unending life will be passed depends on the choice of the soul itself, we must recall the relationship in which the Church stood to the Jewish and pagan world, in which it was originally planted.

Our Lord compared the kingdom of God—the Church—to seed cast upon the earth: "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground."[1]

To His Church He gave a divine life-force that was destined to draw into itself all that was valuable in the pre-Christian systems; it was to be sown first in Jewish soil and then transplanted, in order that it might be fostered and developed by the philosophies, mythologies, and worships of ancient Greece and Rome. It was, however, destined to produce a fruit peculiarly its own. It is the province of history to try and discover how the soil ministered to the growth of the Church; how Christianity worked up the raw materials of Judaism and paganism, separating elementary bodies and joining them together afresh; rejecting this, absorbing that;

[1] St. Mark iv. 26.

now hindered and now helped by its environment, but steadily developing and ripening for the harvest.

When we apply these thoughts to the teaching of our Lord and His Apostles, we have to consider first whether what was taught was entirely a new revelation, or whether it was teaching that presupposed a certain belief in those who were addressed. The doctrines of the Trinity and Unity of God, and the redemption of the world, may be given as examples of doctrines that were hitherto unknown. But even these new revelations needed the aid of Greek thought to find anything like adequate expression in human language.

On the other hand, the human intellect, enlightened doubtless by that Divine Word Who, St. John says, "lighteth every man that cometh into the world," had very generally arrived at a belief in the existence of God, and the duty of worship. The survival of the soul after the death of the body, its immortality, and the doctrine that the future life was one of reward or of punishment, were also beliefs accepted by the greater part of the Jewish world, and familiar to the more thoughtful among the pagans. We have, then, in considering any doctrine of our Lord, to ask what preparation there had been for His teaching in the Jewish Church; in what sense, consequently, those who heard Him would understand His words, and whether or no our Lord confirmed or contradicted the received belief of His day. In studying the teaching given by the Apostles to the Gentiles we must ask the same questions. The

truth as to any doctrine will be found in the final belief of the Church. Those who do not regard the Church as the divine teacher will necessarily, if they are Christians, be left in uncertainty on many points that the Bible does not plainly decide.

Christianity assimilated the belief as to the survival of the soul after death, while it rejected the doctrine of its pre-existence. The Scriptures of the New Testament, however, do not discuss the question whether or no this survival is due to the essential permanence of the human soul, neither do the Scriptures tell us plainly that because the soul survives death it must survive everlastingly. The writers of the New Testament do, however, assert that "the gift of God is eternal life,"[1] and that the soul departing from the body in the grace of God will enjoy life everlasting. What concerns those who belong to the Church is not whether or no they, as individuals, can find this or that doctrine in Holy Scripture, but what, as a whole, the Church of God has taught men to believe to be the true meaning of Holy Writ.

The seed of divine teaching given by Jesus Christ, fostered by enlightened Greek thought, and moulded and nourished by the Holy Spirit, has undoubtedly resulted in the doctrine of the soul's immortality being accepted throughout Christendom as the truth. In its growth the divine seed has worked up the raw materials of Jewish and pagan speculation; separated and joined

[1] Rom. vi. 23.

together afresh their elementary beliefs. It is sufficient to say that nothing in the Bible contradicts this belief, while very much, as might be expected, supports it. The most enlightened human intellect has not been able to find any reason why the soul, if it can survive death, should ever cease to exist, since it appears to be a spiritual substance, simple and indivisible; and, unlike the body, not endangered by sickness, decay, or other evils.

It may be truly said that, looking at the matter from a purely rational point of view, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is so highly probable that it would be rash to deny it. We cannot, indeed, *know* that the soul is immortal, but we have, as we have seen, many reasons to believe that it is, and the fact that the human soul can conceive of God seems to show its own kinship with the eternal.

Such proof as there is of the immortality of the soul must be sought in the study of the science of psychology; no single argument taken by itself seems strong enough to bring conviction, but the sum of evidence offers a body of witness that has certainly not yet been overthrown, and cannot be lightly set aside.

There is no absolute proof of the existence of God, and yet we may confidently assert that mankind as a whole has always believed in the existence of a Supreme Being. This faith in the existence of God has every kind of witness that it is a reasonable faith, although it is incapable of scientific demonstration. Even so, speaking generally, men have always and everywhere

believed that the soul can and does survive death, and the Church has taught that the soul will be reunited with the body and live on for ever. That which is impossible in its own nature is not desired by men, and the desire of immortality which seems to be ingrained in the human heart must either be the exception which proves the rule, or else a longing that is destined to be satisfied. God, it is said, "has given eternity in the heart of man,"[1] and this argument from the desire of eternal life is usually thought to be a strong one. We may here again insist on the fact that, after all, it is less with the immortality of the *soul* that Christianity is concerned, than with the resurrection of the body and the consequent immortality of man. The soul survives death and is destined to be reunited with the body—this, all agree, is plainly taught in Holy Writ. The point of difference is that some assert that only the righteous continue to live on for ever after the resurrection, while the Church has encouraged the belief that the wicked do not survive death merely to share in the resurrection for a time and then cease from conscious existence, but that consciousness is retained by the reprobate as well as by the elect. It would indeed be a "gospel," if it were true, that after the resurrection the wicked, being incapable of salvation, would to all intents and purposes cease to exist; but the question is one that we cannot answer for ourselves in the way we should desire; we must accept the answer that God has given. To assert that what we deem to

[1] Eccles. iii. 11. (R.V.)

be the more humane belief must of necessity be the truth, is perilous. It has been truly said that the real difficulty is not the eternal endurance of evil, but that evil should ever have been permitted. The gift of free-will is not without its very apparent difficulties, but the denial of the possession of free-will only leads us from one perplexity into another still more profound. We must not, however, enter upon an inquiry into the mystery of the fate of the "lost," but it was needful to touch upon the truth that the soul is designed for the body, and that consequently it is to the resurrection of the flesh that the Church directs our thoughts when she speaks of "the life of the world to come," rather than to the temporary state of the soul between the death and resurrection of the body, with which the following chapters are concerned.

To sum up, we may assert that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not merely a Christian belief, but one also that was reached before the time of the Incarnation, by some of the most profound thinkers the world has ever known. This belief was at any rate known to the Jews and accepted by some of them, while others taught a doctrine similar to that of conditional immortality. The orthodox Jews seem not to have been clear as to whether or no every soul must live on in eternal consciousness. With reference to the Old Testament teaching, and indeed to the teaching of the whole Bible, we may bear in mind the words of Dr. Liddon: "The Bible nowhere

deals with the natural immortality of the human soul as a thesis to be proved. As in the case of the soul's spirituality, the Bible scarcely asserts, but everywhere takes the truth for granted."[1]

If we turn to the Church there is no question that even if the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not, as such, part of the faith contained in the Creed, it is yet so far *de fide* that the Church takes for granted the survival of the soul after the death of the body, since she has made the resurrection of the body an article of the faith, and after the resurrection speaks of the future as "the life everlasting."

Over the final fate of the reprobate the writers of the New Testament draw a veil. They disclose them in torment up to and after the resurrection, but whether or no these unhappy ones are for ever conscious of their misery we are not plainly told. The belief of Christendom has been that consciousness remains to the reprobate as well as to the righteous.

It now becomes necessary to ask how far the life of the soul after the death of the body is a continuation of the present life on earth. Do we, after the death of the body, develop along the lines we have hitherto been travelling over, or does death entirely change our nature as well as our environment? If the force of analogical argument is to be admitted, it will be surely found that the next life is the outcome of the life we are now living.

> "Life is probation, and this earth no goal,
> But starting-point of man."[2]

[1] *Some Elements of Religion.* [2] BROWNING, *The Pope.*

IV.

The Breaking of Dreams

THE BREAKING OF DREAMS

My soul was sick with grief when from on high
There fell a voice majestic, strong, and sweet,
As of some Presence from God's Mercy-Seat.
I gazed around, but none could I descry,
Yet felt I not the less that one drew nigh,
Who as a spirit did my spirit greet
With words of love that I can ne'er repeat,
Then silent, waited, as for some reply.
Grief sealed my lips; then spake the voice to me:
"Weep not as if the dead forgetful sleep:
See how yon star out of the darkness gleams!
So he thou lovest watches over thee:
Yea,' all the blessed Dead bright vigil keep,
For yonder comes the breaking of earth's dreams."

R. E. H.

IV.

The Breaking of Dreams

WE may look at death from several points of view. Let us take two. First, there is death as a physical fact—the final result of the general impairing of the mechanism of the body as it passes from the vigour of life to the decay of old age, or else the more or less sudden failure of some vital function of the body brought about by decay or accident. Be the remote cause of death what it may, the proximate cause in every case is said to be the stoppage of the circulation of the blood, putting an end to the exchange of matter and energy which are the characteristic accompaniments of life. If man has no soul in the theological sense of the word—death is the end of man. His body goes to corruption, and with the body his mind also perishes. The world may continue to cherish his memory for a time, and his works may still influence society, but the man himself has perished.

In all ages many have thus thought of death, and nowhere perhaps is this sad creed more beautifully portrayed than in the words of the deutero-canonical book entitled "The Wisdom of Solomon." "We are born at

all adventure: and we shall be hereafter as though we had never been: for the breath in our nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark in the moving of our heart: which being extinguished, our body shall be turned into ashes, and our spirit shall vanish as the soft air, and our name shall be forgotten in time, and no man shall have our works in remembrance, and our life shall pass away as the trace of a cloud, and shall be dispersed as a mist that is driven away with the beams of the sun, and overcome with the heat thereof. For our time is a very shadow that passeth away; and after our end there is no returning: for it is fast sealed, so that no man cometh again." This, we are told, said the ungodly "reasoning with themselves, but not aright."[1]

It is quite unnecessary to prove that this is not the way in which the holy Scriptures, taken as a whole, would have us look at death. Throughout the Bible there is scattered everywhere the teaching that death is not the end of our life, but the gate by which we leave one form of life and enter upon another. If it is the dark valley over which the shadow hovers, it is, after all, only the valley through which the soul must pass in order to reach the eternal hills on whose heights the sunlight ever rests.

The question we have now to consider is whether the moral condition of the soul is altered by the death of the body. Does death change not merely the environment of the soul but also its moral condition? Does

[1] Wisdom ii. 2–5.

the next life grow out of this life and continue it, or, is death a transformation of the soul in such wise that at its entry into the new mode of life the moral condition of the soul is at once entirely changed?

In trying to answer this question we may first of all look at death as it is in itself—a merely physical fact. From this point of view there seems no reason at all why death should alter the moral condition of the soul. All that death appears to do is to separate the soul from the body. The character, the active and passive habits, intellectual and moral, that have been formed during the soul's life of union with the body, can hardly be altered by the death of the body. If they are not altered, then the life after death must be a continuation, a development of the life begun here on earth, and the determination of the direction of our intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth must be the purpose of our present state of existence.

As far as can be seen by the light of reason there is nothing in the death of the body that would tend to alter the habits and moral state of the soul. The tendency of intellectual and moral habits is to develop and become more and more deeply rooted. The ill-tempered man who never checks himself becomes unbearably disagreeable; his natural irritability develops into habitual anger and even violence; and—given time—may result in a maniacal self-destroying frenzy. The intemperate man becomes more and more sensual, until body and soul seem to sink together into an

unfathomable depth of degradation. The slothful, the irreverent, the proud, the unmerciful, the ungrateful, and the selfish are all tending towards a moral state that becomes their character. An impulse continually yielded to becomes a habit, and habits are not usually altered in a moment. It is true that the choice of another line of conduct is always potentially within reach, but experience teaches how seldom it is that a long-continued habit is speedily eradicated. Can we reasonably suppose that death can mechanically, as it were, alter the whole drift of the soul's life? Is it not more reasonable to suppose that what a man was before death, that he is immediately afterwards, and that the future life is a continuation of the soul's existence under new conditions? The same, of course, holds good as to those who during life have tended towards righteousness, or rather who have not consciously chosen unrighteousness. They will also be the same after death as before.[1]

This, however, is only one aspect of death. There is another which is more hopeful. Granted that death itself cannot alter the intellectual and moral attitude of the soul, may not some change be effected by the new conditions of life to which death introduces the soul? If the environment of the soul after death were the same as during life the argument against death affecting the soul would be very strong. But what is the case? For the first time in its experience the soul,

[1] Rev. xxii. 11.

freed from the body, is face to face with the realities of the unseen world. The mists of time and all doubts as to the reality of a conscious hereafter, the uncertainties and perplexities that have perhaps almost hidden God from the soul during life, are now swept away for ever, and the dim faith that has hitherto flickered in the soul suddenly leaps up into the fullest knowledge. If it be true that here "we have but faith, we cannot know, for knowledge is of things we see," then it is also true that after death for the first time the soul sees God no longer "through a glass darkly," but "face to face." In the clear light of the other world comes the realisation of the meaning of the words of the great Apostle, "Then shall I know even as also I am known."[1] Who can say that, through this illumination, in the passionless atmosphere of the new life the soul may not instantly see its own imperfection and turn towards God with a strong act of the will, renouncing evil and choosing good, now that, for the first time, good and evil are seen in their true light?[2]

While therefore there seems no ground for supposing that the mere act of dying can change the condition of the soul, there is no apparent reason why the entry of the soul into an entirely new mode of life may not alter the attitude of the will towards righteousness and evil.

The question that we must now ask is this, Is there any ground in Holy Scripture for supposing that the

[1] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [2] See p. 347.

soul is improved by its entry into the life of the unseen world?

It must be confessed that we have hardly any teaching in Holy Scripture that touches upon this subject. In one of the parables, however, we have a picture given to us by our Lord that certainly seems to teach the possibility of some such improvement of the soul as that of which we have been thinking.[1] In the parable of Dives and Lazarus we are distinctly given to understand that the rich man's sin had been his selfishness. It appears that this selfishness was fostered by the ease and luxury in which he had lived. Now, no sooner has the rich man died and passed into Hades than we notice not only a change of environment, but also a change, already manifesting itself, in his character. The rich man no longer finds all his wants satisfied, but, on the contrary, he is tormented by thirst. Suffering thus himself, he has already, we notice, so far learned the lesson he has to learn, that he is unselfishly anxious for the welfare of his brethren on earth. The use of the word "hell" in the Authorised Version has very generally led people to think of Dives as in the place of the hopelessly lost. This is misleading. The Revised Version gives the accurate translation of the word—"And in *Hades* he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." Hades is the whole realm of the dead who are not in Heaven; it certainly includes the place of the reprobate—Gehenna—but where the unseen world of the "lost"

[1] St. Luke xvi. 19–31.

is meant we find that the word Gehenna is usually employed in the New Testament. Now, as we shall see later on, the Jews were familiar with the idea of educational punishment in the unseen nether world, and thus the imagery of the parable would be understood by those who heard it to teach the truth that the conquest of evil can only be through suffering, and that usually God mercifully ordains that penal suffering shall be not only a punishment, but also an education, a means of correction: He "scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."[1]

It is no doubt true that a parable must not be unduly pressed in all its details, nor may we build too confidently upon its imagery. The fact, however, that the Church has very generally allowed, and even encouraged, the belief that in the new light of the new life the soul is filled with sorrow for sin and desire for God, is exactly the witness needful to justify the interpretation that has been suggested as to the purpose of the punishment of the rich man in this parable.

The parable furnishes a scriptural basis for a hope that has always found a place in the heart of Christendom, and is to-day more than ever insisted upon by all thoughtful people—a hope that some hereafter may be taught lessons they have failed to learn here on earth, and so be saved "yet so as by fire."[2]

[1] Heb. xii. 6.

[2] 1 Cor. iii. 15. The statement in the parable that there is a great gulf fixed between the two places in Hades and that souls could not pass from one to the other, has led commentators very generally to suppose Dives was finally lost, but others think the words may be understood differently.

A further question now suggests itself: Does the time of probation end with this life or does it extend beyond the grave? In trying to find the answer we must be clear as to what we mean by "probation." If by probation is meant the formation of character, then, as we gather from the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, the time of probation may be said to extend into the life after death. The general teaching of the Church, however, leads us to understand by probation something very different from this. It is taught that the soul has a divine life given to it; that the object of the life here on earth is to develop this supernatural life, and above all things to avoid losing it altogether. In other words, the object of this present life is to become Christlike by the careful performance of duty in the spirit and power of Christ. Sin, on the other hand, either weakens this life of the soul or destroys it altogether. Sin is another name for an act or motive that is not only un-Christlike, but positively destructive in a lesser or greater degree of the soul's resemblance to God. If at the moment of death the likeness of the soul to the Divine Pattern is not only imperfect, but absolutely obliterated beyond all possibility of restoration, then, and only then, can it be said that the soul is "lost." None but God can know to whom this loss happens, or how often or seldom it happens, and in any given instance it would be in the highest degree rash and wicked to say that such and such a man has no hope of salvation. The Church

merely teaches—as the most probable opinion—that if a soul does depart out of this life without a spark of the divine life, it is "lost." To take an example, the vitality of the body may be seriously impaired by sickness or accident, but as long as life remains there may be the possibility of complete restoration to health and strength. When life is extinct all hope of recovery is gone. May it not be even so with the soul? Sin may weaken its life and bring it near to death, but as long as the spiritual life is not extinct there is hope of progress and restoration. It was said of our Lord, The "smoking flax shall He not quench";[1] and therefore we may be sure that if a soul is condemned, the condemnation is not an arbitrary sentence, but the judicial statement of an already accomplished fact. The physician does not condemn to death when he pronounces that life is extinct; he states—with sorrow it may be—a fact he cannot alter. One thing we must never forget, and that is, that the spiritual life cannot be lost by want of knowledge in regard to that life, or by lack of opportunity to develop it. These things may impair the life of the soul: they cannot destroy it. Only a conscious, determined, and wilful rejection of good, and choice of what is known to be evil, can destroy the spiritual life. Hence the divine life may exist in those who seem to us entirely without it, because their surroundings have made it impossible that they should know more of the will

[1] St. Matt. xii. 20.

of God than they have learnt from a conscience that has had little help to form itself rightly. Such persons have, as we say, "had no chance," and for that very reason have not knowingly rejected God or His righteousness. The Divine Master has told us that "He that knew not [his lord's will] and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."[1] Those to whom but little has been given will be accepted if they have not wilfully misused that little. The true Light "lighteth every man that cometh into the world,"[2] but the light is sometimes obscured by circumstances, and sometimes it is intentionally rejected. It was the neglect of an obvious duty that was punished in the story of Dives, and in that other parable where our Lord speaks of the final judgment. It is quite plain that in this latter parable the acts of kindness mentioned were not done consciously for God, but sprang from the promptings of an "honest and good heart"[3]: "Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? . . . And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me."[4]

When we remember that the death of the soul can

[1] St. Luke xii. 48.
[2] St. John i. 9.
[3] St. Luke viii. 15.
[4] St. Matt. xxv. 31–46.

only result from a deliberate act of the will, we see how large a hope we have for the salvation of the human race. The ground of hope is that God is just and also merciful. God would have "all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,"[1] but He has given man free-will, and if the will of man deliberately rejects God, then, it may be, that even God Himself cannot force salvation upon His rational creatures.

But taking for granted that the soul has not knowingly and wilfully rejected God, then all the possibilities of a growth in holiness are open to it hereafter. According to the words of St. Paul it may be said of such a soul that, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."[2]

Death, while it destroys for a time the life of the body, secures for ever the life of the soul that departs hence "alive unto God." If, as far as we know, the spiritually dead cannot regain life hereafter, so neither can he who has spiritual life lose it in the world to come.

A glimpse of the truth was given to Plato, who tells us in the Phædrus that "There is a law that the paths of darkness beneath the earth shall never be trodden by those who have so much as set foot on the heavenward road."

We may conclude, then, that while it is improbable that the mere act of dying can alter the moral condition

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 4. [2] Phil. i. 6.

of the soul, yet there is every reason to hope that the entry into the realities of the spiritual world may help the soul to go forward towards perfection, and that God will hereafter continue the good work begun here and complete it "until the day of Jesus Christ."

V.

The Witness of the Old Testament

"The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, Who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises" (Article vii.).

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience, and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4).

V.

The Witness of the Old Testament

IT is not easy for Christians to approach the Old Testament Scriptures without reading into them the fuller revelation that has been given in the Gospel.

We have to guard against this tendency when our object is not to find out what Christian truth lay hidden in this or that passage of the Old Testament, but what was thought to be the original significance of the words —what belief they expressed or fostered at the time they were written.

There are, for example, indications that we can now see in the Old Testament of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity; but it would of course be a mistake to suppose that such passages were understood in that sense by the Hebrews.

Thus also, in dealing with the Old Testament teaching as to a life after death, we have to consider not what we now think to be the full significance of these passages, but, if possible, first to ascertain the exact meaning of the words in which such a life is hinted at or mentioned, and then—from the current Jewish belief and tradition —to find out what teaching these portions of Holy

Writ conveyed to the Hebrew people before the coming of Jesus Christ. It is a further study to follow up this traditional belief and trace its recognition in the teaching of the New Testament.

The difficulty, however, of arriving at the historical or literal meaning of some passages of the Old Testament is often very great, and sometimes impossible. The moral and spiritual meaning may be clear, but the lapse of time may render it beyond our power to arrive at the circumstances attending the original assertion, command, prophecy, or prayer. Again, we learn from the New Testament that very many of the apparently historical events recorded in the Old Testament were typical of some truth of the Gospel, and at times it is not easy to say if the type was meant to be regarded as an historical fact or as an allegory or parable. There are various kinds of inspiration. The Sibyl and the Pythoness of ancient Hellas were thought to be inspired, but no one supposed that the oracles they delivered demanded a literal interpretation. In the Bible we find that inspiration is bestowed for a special purpose to which it is carefully proportioned. At one time it takes the form of certain commands coming directly from God, as in the giving of the Law. At another time the historian is guided to select certain facts, and to record certain actions—some good, some bad. At yet another time the prophet, witnessing the struggles, the sins, and the perils of his time, is "inspired" to seize the lesson that the events should teach, or to point out their remedy. What the

historian records and the prophet proclaims is overruled by God to convey to all ages a spiritual or moral lesson, over and above the immediate meaning of the words at the time they were uttered.

In the order of Nature we are constantly in the presence of mystery—phenomena that at present we cannot explain or understand. Nature bears witness to the existence of God, but she does not manifest Him so plainly that atheism is rendered absolutely impossible. It is only by degrees, "here a little, and there a little,"[1] that Science is reading the book of Nature, and we certainly need not be surprised if the same slowness is required for progress in the understanding of the written Word of God. It seems as if we heard once again the words of our Lord, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?"[2]

In both Nature and Holy Scripture there is a power that witnesses for God—that forces upon us the conviction that we are in contact with a work that is beyond the skill of man. We must therefore be patient and humble, trying to find out what we may, and not be discouraged if we can at the best make but little progress in our knowledge of the deep things of God.

In considering what the Old Testament has to tell us of the life hereafter, it will be well first of all to state briefly the meaning of two words used in the Old

[1] Isa. xxviii. 10. [2] St. John iii. 12.

Testament with reference to the unseen world—"Heaven," and "Sheol."

There are four[1] Hebrew words used for "heaven." The first of these simply means the firmament; the second is used in the expression "the heaven and the earth," meaning the upper as distinct from the lower regions; the third word is used for a "place above," "He sent from above—from on high—He took me, He drew me out of many waters";[2] and again, "He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth."[3] In these instances the word means simply a mountain or high place. The fourth word means "expanse," and refers to the extent of the heavens. If we turn to tradition, we find that the Jews divided heaven into three parts —the air, the firmament, and the upper heaven, the abode of God and of the holy angels.[4]

Heaven is not infrequently mentioned in the Old Testament as the dwelling-place of God and the angels, but there is no reference to its being the destined home of either the disembodied spirits of the righteous, or of man after the resurrection of the flesh.

The other word used of the unseen world is "SHEOL." It means in the Old Testament both "the grave" and the whole nether world of departed spirits. The

[1] Ràkîa; Shâmayim; Márôm; Shechâkîm.

[2] Ps. xviii. 16. [3] Ps. cii. 19.

[4] Job xxii. 12: "Is not God in the height of heaven? And behold the height of the stars, how high they are. And thou sayest, How doth God know? Can He judge through the dark cloud?"

Authorised Version often uses the word "hell" as the translation of Sheol. This word in its strict sense[1] is no doubt a fair equivalent for Sheol in both its significations, but in modern use "hell" is almost exclusively associated with the idea of a place or state of torment—an idea never connected with Sheol. We must beware, then, of allowing the thought of pain to link itself to the word [Sheol or] "hell" in the Old Testament.

When Jacob was told that his son Joseph was dead he said, "I will go down to Sheol[2] to my son mourning."

In the Book of Job we are told that Sheol is deep,[3] and dark—"a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death."[4] From the Book of Numbers we learn that Sheol was thought to be in the bowels of the earth; hence Korah and his companions are said to have gone "down alive into Sheol." In the Book of the Proverbs the guests of "the foolish woman" are said to be on the way to "the depths of Sheol,"[5] an expression which suggests that in the nether world there were supposed to be various degrees of gloom.

From these passages—and they might be multiplied

[1] A pit or hole,—hence "the grave,"—and also the place of departed spirits. The Greek equivalent is Hades. The Vulgate translates Sheol by "Infernus" and "Inferus." It was to "hell" in the sense of Hades, or Sheol, that our Lord descended. "He descended into hell," or as the Latin runs, *descendit ad inferos*—the nether world.

[2] "Grave" in the A.V. In Psalm cxxxix. 8, "If I make my bed in *hell* behold Thou art there," Sheol is the word translated "hell."

[3] Job xi. 8. In Deut. xxxii. 22, "A fire is kindled . . . and burneth unto the lowest Sheol"—or pit.

[4] Job x. 22. [5] Prov. ix. 18.

—it is clear that although the Hebrew ideas as to the life in Sheol were vague, yet there was a general belief that the place of departed spirits was one of gloom, if not of absolute darkness, and that the life there was but a shadowy and empty existence. We find no mention of a place or state of joy, light and peace as awaiting the dead; neither do we come across any mention of a place of torment. In one of the Psalms we hear of the "pains of Sheol,"[1] but it is clear that nothing more is meant than that the Psalmist tasted the sorrow which it was thought the dead must feel at the loss of the enjoyment of the faculties of mind and body. The pains that were necessarily involved in dying, and so passing out of the light into the twilight and gloom of the nether world, are the only suffering that the Old Testament knew of as awaiting the dead. The main thought of Sheol is of a place where all the dead are in sombrous sadness, whence later on we find there was a hope of escape through the resurrection of the body.

Throughout the whole of the Old Testament we can hardly fail to notice how very seldom there is any reference to reward or punishment in a future life as a motive for well-doing here and now. Indeed from the Pentateuch it would be difficult to prove that the Israelites were taught that there is any life beyond the grave. It is hardly too much to say that the Israelites had no eschatology of their own till after the

[1] Ps. cxvi. 3.

Exile. The primitive eschatology of the individual in Israel was, it is now generally supposed, derived from heathen sources, and seems to have been closely connected with ancestor worship. The Teraphim were household gods, and probably images of ancestors, though later they were regarded as images of the god of Israel (Yahwè).

We gather that sacrifices were offered to the dead,[1] and that the right to offer them was limited to a son of the departed, and hence in the after-life men were able to be punished by the destruction of their posterity.[2] To destroy the children deprived the dead of sacrifices. Again, to be deprived of burial was a great punishment in Israel[3]—not because it hindered the spirit from entering Hades, as the Greeks and Romans thought, but because the sacrifices to the dead were offered at the grave, and the grave was, as it were, the temple of ancestor worship. Thus, until the Exile, the belief of Israel as to the future life was more or less heathen, and, as far as we know, Israel had for centuries no clear revelation as to the hereafter. Directly we come to Mosaism, however, we find continual legislation against this heathen ancestor worship. The first stage of Israelitish religion forbade heathen practices, and gradually prepared the way for a truer belief.

There is no doctrine of individual retribution in pre-prophetic times; for the family, not the individual, was the unit in Israel. It was only late in the seventh

[1] Deut. xxvi. 14. [2] Ex. xxxiv. 7; Num. xiv. 18.
[3] 2 Kings ix. 10; Jer. xxv. 33.

century before Christ that the doctrine of individual retribution was proclaimed by the prophet Jeremiah, and it was evidently a novelty.[1]

The discipline of the Law centred in the fact that wrongdoing brought calamity upon Israel, and the righteousness that came by keeping the Law brought prosperity. The silence as to the truth about a future life is the more remarkable, as Israel in Egypt must have been familiarised with the elaborate mythology of the dead that held so conspicuous a place in Egyptian religion. The comparatively few references to a future life that are found in the earlier books of the Old Testament are not of a dogmatic character, and it is often difficult to say whether they are figurative allusions to death or whether they really express a belief in a conscious survival of the spirit. In the Book of Genesis the expression "gathered to his people" probably means something more than buried in the grave of his fathers. This is implied in more than one passage; for instance: "Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people. And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him . . ."[2] Again, "Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people . . . and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him."[3] And once more, in the Book of Numbers, "The Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron . . . saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people . . ."[4]

[1] Jer. xxxi. 29, 30. [2] Gen. xxv. 8. [3] Gen. xxxv. 29.
[4] xx. 24; see also Gen. xlix. 29, 33; Num. xxvii. 13, xxxi. 2.

In ancestor worship the family grave was the desired resting-place, and from this reunion of bodies probably grew up the idea of Sheol as the meeting-place of the spirits of the dead.

In an earlier passage it is said of Enoch that he "was not, for God took him." How far it was recognised that Enoch was "translated that he should not see death"[1] we have no means of knowing, neither do we know where it was supposed that he was taken.[2] It would seem, however, not unlikely that, if it was believed that he was translated, the place whither he went would be thought of as some heavenly abode above the earth rather than Sheol. Later on we read of Elijah that he "went up by a whirlwind into heaven,"[3] and it is probable that the expression used with reference to Enoch implies some such translation from earth to heaven. In any case the "rapture" of Elijah teaches us that if Sheol was the ordinary abode of the dead, yet to some few specially favoured ones some higher state was opened.[4]

Among the passages that relate to the dead, we notice here and there a reference to practices by which it was

[1] Heb. xi. 5.

[2] In Ecclus. xliv. 16., the Vulgate reads, "Enoch was translated . . . into Paradise." The Arabic legend differs from that in Jasher. See *Legends of Old Testament Characters*, S. BARING-GOULD, M.A., vol. i.

[3] 2 Kings ii. 11.

[4] It is commonly taught by Western theologians that Enoch and Elijah were not taken to heaven, but to some place whence they will come to oppose Antichrist at the end. Our Lord's words also tell against their having been taken to heaven. See St. John iii. 13.

claimed that the living could hold intercourse with the departed. All such intercourse was forbidden by God,[1] perhaps because it was wrong in itself, or possibly because its ceremonial was closely bound up with Egyptian idolatry, and the ancestor worship that appears to have been common in primitive Israel. In Leviticus it is commanded, "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead";[2] and in Deuteronomy, "Ye shall not cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead."[3] Again, one justifies himself by the declaration, "I have not eaten thereof in my mourning . . . nor given ought thereof for the dead."[4] These superstitions at least bear witness to the popular belief in the survival of the soul after death; but it is in the prayer of Balaam—who died fighting against Israel—that, strangely enough, we have one of the first expressions of a hope of a conscious hereafter: "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh."[5] We must not, however, build too much upon a poetical expression of this sort. The words certainly seem to assert a conscious survival of the "Ego," or Self, of the unhappy seer, but even here commentators differ, some asserting that the present tenses are used, and consequently that the words should be rendered, "I see him . . . I behold him."

The same uncertainty as to their exact meaning

[1] Exodus xxii. 18; Lev. xix. 31; xx. 27; Deut. xviii. 10, 11; Isa. viii. 19; xix. 3.

[2] Lev. xix. 28.

[3] Deut. xiv. 1.

[4] Deut. xxvi. 14.

[5] Num. xxiv. 17.

surrounds the familiar words of Job, "I know that my redeemer"—my next of kin, my avenger and advocate—"liveth, and shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."[1] The passage is extremely difficult and uncertain in meaning. Instead of "in my flesh" the Revised Version reads "from my flesh," and has a marginal explanation that this may mean "without," *i.e.* apart from my flesh. It seems, however, clear that Job did look beyond the present age to a life after death, and that in that life he rises, above the gloomy thought of Sheol, to the conviction that hereafter his "advocate" will make known his innocence, and that he will see God.

Again, we gather from the many denunciations of those who had "familiar spirits," that something of the belief which we now call Spiritualism was very prevalent in the early days of Israel. It is evident that those who had this "familiar spirit"—the "mediums"—professed to be able to communicate with the dead. When Saul went to consult the woman at Endor he said, "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee. . . . Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel." Then when the woman had done as Saul commanded, he inquired

[1] Job xix. 25–27.

of the woman, saying, "What sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw a god (R.V.) ascending out of the earth." And when "Saul perceived that it was Samuel he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself. And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up?"[1] Here it is evidently from Sheol that Samuel is said to come "up," and it is to this nether world that he summons Saul with the words, "To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me." Samuel the prophet of God, and Saul the worldly, rejected king of Israel, are each represented as destined to go to the same place.

When we pass from the historical books and come to the Psalms and Prophets we find evidence of the dawn of a clearer hope. It is true that many commentators would wish us to believe that David and the Prophets were not able to anticipate the life of the world to come —that their announcements must be limited to the present dispensation. This view surely does violence to the plain text of Scripture, and is quite as arbitrary an assumption as any that has been put forward by extremists on the other side. We find the expression of a confident hope of a future life in many of the psalms; for instance, in the 23rd, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me"; in the 17th, "I shall be

[1] 1 Sam. xxviii. 7–19. The departed in Sheol are seldom spoken of as "souls" in the Old Testament, owing to the inability of early Israel to think of the soul without a certain corporeity.

satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness"; in the 16th, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol." Again, in the 49th, "They [men] are appointed as a flock for Sheol; Death shall be their shepherd: and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall be for Sheol to consume, that there be no habitation for it. But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol: for He shall receive me."[1] And once more, in the Book of Proverbs we are told that "to the wise the way of life goeth upward, that he may depart from Sheol beneath."[2] These and similar passages are surely inconsistent with the belief that death is the end of all conscious individual existence.

Again, did David mean nothing more than that he too must die by the touching words in which he spoke of the loss of his child: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me"?[3]

It is quite true that against these hopeful passages may be set others very different in tone; there are certainly passages that appear to deny the survival of the spirit, or at least to negative any continuity of its faculties. The thought of God was to many in Israel the very stay of the soul throughout life; how terrible then must have been the conviction that, "in death there is no remembrance of Thee," and the thought of the cessation of the praises of God implied in the question, "In Sheol who shall give Thee thanks?"[4]

[1] See an explanation of this by Rabbi Akiba, p. 128.
[2] xv. 24. R.V. [3] 2 Sam. xii. 23. [4] Ps. vi. 5.

"Shall the dust praise Thee? shall it declare Thy truth?"[1] or in the yet more positive assertion, "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."[2]

In the Prophets the sad, forlorn state of the disembodied spirit is much less prominent, and the hope of a final restoration is proclaimed through the resurrection of the body. It is in this connection that the first note is sounded of a warning that the new life will be preceded by a severe judgment, and followed not only by rewards, but also by suffering in the case of those who have lived wickedly.

The lament that Hezekiah made before God was that "the grave cannot praise Thee; . . . they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth";[3] but the Holy Ghost "Who spake by the prophets" gave through Hosea a promise that was full of a joyful expectation of immortality: "I will ransom them from the power of the grave (Sheol); I will redeem them from death: O death, where are thy plagues? O grave (Sheol), where is thy destruction?"[4]

In the Book of the prophet Isaiah we have a dramatic description of the tranquillity of the earth after the death of the Babylonian king, and how Sheol was moved at the entry of his spirit among the ghosts of the departed; "The whole earth is at rest and is quiet: . . . Hell (Sheol) from beneath is moved for thee to

[1] Ps. xxx. 9. [2] Ps. cxv. 17.
[3] Isa. xxxviii. 18. [4] Hosea xiii. 14 (R.V.); cf. 1 Cor. xv. 55.

meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth."[1]

Joel has a vision of judgment, symbolised by the punishment of the enemies of Israel in the valley of Jehoshaphat:[2] Isaiah foretells "the new heavens and the new earth,"[3] and then describes the destruction of the unrighteous by the figure of the valley into which are flung the carcases of men, a prey to the undying worm and the fire that is never quenched. The same prophet speaks also of the resurrection of the flesh: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."[4] The symbolical use by Ezekiel of a resuscitation of the dry bones to express a national deliverance may perhaps not unfitly be also thought of as including the hope of a personal resurrection."[5]

A later prophet is still clearer in his vision of judgment: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."[6]

Besides these actual references to the difference between the condition of the righteous and the wicked

[1] Isa. xiv. 7–9. [2] Joel iii. 12–16. [3] Isa. lxvi. 22, 24.
[4] Isa. xxvi. 19. [5] Ezek. xxxvii. 1–14. [6] Dan. xii. 2, 3.

in the future life there are, of course, great first principles of God's justice clearly laid down in the Old Testament —and nowhere more plainly than in the Book of the prophet Ezekiel. Among the more important of these principles are the following: that man has free-will, and consequently is responsible for the use he makes of it; that the sinner will be judged according to his own merit—"The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him";[1] that repentance involves the forsaking of sin and the following after righteousness; that perseverance in good to the end is essential, or, at any rate, that death must find a man walking in the way that is "lawful and right," if he would "save his soul alive." In brief, God's message was, "I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. . . . I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye."[2]

It is perhaps in the consideration of these vital principles—principles that seem to be involved in the existence of God, the free-will of man, and his relationship to his Maker—that we may find the best answer to the query why no clearer revelation as to a future life was given to Israel. If such a revelation had been needful in order that men should attain their end, then it would be difficult to harmonise the fact that it was withheld with the fact of the goodness and justice of

[1] Ezek. xviii. 20. [2] Ezek. xviii. 30, 32.

God. But from the very first we find the principle laid down that well-doing is the true service of God and that evil-doing means the rejection of God. No gifts, no external ceremonial worship, could possibly be accepted in place of that obedience of which worship was meant to be the outward expression. Cain offered to God a sacrifice of the fruit of the earth, but it had no moral value: it did not represent the inward obedience of the will of Cain to the will of God. It was an acted lie, and therefore for that reason it was rejected: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door."[1] In the earlier stages of the moral education of Israel, it was above all things needful for them to grasp the importance of well-doing here and now, and the value of character. It may have been for this reason that obedience and disobedience were sanctioned by temporal rewards and punishments. Man had to learn that sin is nothing else than a wilful marring of the perfection of the soul, a departure from the likeness of God, and therefore sin necessarily brought with it some unhappiness. This fact was, as it were, made visible to Israel by temporal rewards and punishments. From these they were meant to learn that sin brought ruin into the hidden life of the soul.

If it be objected that sin is often committed by an act of the will, and that such spiritual sin was not visited upon Israel by temporal calamity, the answer

[1] Gen. iv. 7.

may be that it is only when sin enlists the body in its service that a temporal penalty, here and now, is made possible. And again, the knowledge of evil and its deliberate choice are essential to all formal—as distinct from material—sin. If Israel did not know the sinfulness of much that we know to be sin, then they could not be guilty in the sight of God.

External wrong-doing from the first brought visible punishment, but it was only as the knowledge of God became greater that the estimate of sin became more adequate. When it was fully understood that sin lay in the alienation from God of the spiritual faculties of the soul, whether or no this was manifested in action, then it was also perceived that the spirit itself, even apart from the body, might be unhappy and suffer. If happiness is likeness to God, the misery of the soul that is utterly at variance with God necessarily follows. This unhappiness will be realised just in proportion as the alienation of the will from the Divine will is more or less clearly understood. It may well be that in this life the knowledge never comes so clearly as it comes when the mists of time have passed away, and the spirit of man is brought into the conscious presence of Him Who is Spirit.

The life of God's people under the old Law may be said to have been the Purgative Way of the Church—a time of seeking after God, learning of His justice and His power, though understanding comparatively little of His love; a time for learning pre-

eminently the value of conduct and the need of repentance.

The coming of Jesus Christ brought the Church into the Illuminative Way. The prophet Isaiah had proclaimed His coming and cried aloud to Jerusalem, *Surge illuminare*—"Arise, be enlightened; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee."[1] In this Illuminative Way the Church is called into friendship with God through Jesus Christ; with the clearer light and greater knowledge of God came a more adequate sense of the misery of sin as the power that cuts off the soul from the divine light and plunges it into darkness. The Psalmist had said, *Dominus illuminatio mea*—"The Lord is my light"; but to the Church of old it was not given fully to understand the way in which this truth was to be realised through the Incarnation of that Divine Word, Who is "the brightness of His glory,"[2] Who in the beginning had said, "Let there be light." But if the Jewish Church did not understand the full glory of God, neither does the Christian Church while on earth completely realise the brightness of the heavenly vision that has been in part disclosed to her by the Incarnation of the Eternal Word. That beatitude is reserved for the future—when the Church in the Unitive Way shall enter into a perfect union with God, and become the Church Triumphant, no longer knowing in part, but fully, even as she is known.

[1] Isa. lx. 1 (margin). [2] Heb. i. 3.

"In a glass, through types and riddles,
Dwelling here we see alone;
Then serenely, purely, clearly,
We shall know as we are known,
Fixing our enlightened vision
On the glory of the Throne."

As Israel had but little knowledge of the mystery of the Divine Being, so they had also but a dim idea of the things that God has prepared for them that love Him. The veil that lay across the spiritual vision of God's people made the realm of the departed seem a gloomy and drear abode, where the spirit endured an aimless and shadowy existence—a living death rather than a fuller life. The divine method of education was to lead men step by step upward towards the divine light: "Precept hath been upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."[1]

But there is another reason why perhaps little as to the future life was revealed to Israel. The state of the dead before the Incarnation was only a temporary one. It was to be essentially changed by the victory of Christ over death. It may not have been worth while to fix the thoughts of men upon this imperfect condition of the disembodied spirit, when the world was expecting a Messiah who should bring "life and immortality to light through the gospel."[2] The mystic Paradise was once more to be "opened to all believers"; the fallen temple was to be rebuilt and the promise fulfilled, "The glory of this

[1] Isa. xxviii. 10 (margin). [2] 2 Tim. i. 10.

latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."[1] The Second Adam was far to exceed the first man in glory, and in Him the holy temple builded of living stones was to rise up to God, crowned with light, the home of love and joy and peace. As the dawn of the coming light drew near, the darkness began to melt away. Hence we find that among the Gentiles—the people that are especially said to have "sat in darkness"—there was a growing sense of the reality of the life after death, and in Plato we have many a foregleam of the hope of the Gospel, that death was the gate of a brighter, happier world of which "no earthly bard has ever yet sung, or ever will sing, in worthy strains."[2]

After the close of the canon of the Old Testament Israel was brought into close contact with Greek thought. The deutero-canonical Scriptures were mostly written in Greek, and date in part from the Captivity, and in part from the last three centuries before Christ. The Hebrew prophet Malachi, and Plato—who may be called the prophet of ancient Greece—both lived in the fourth century before Christ. In the book called "The Wisdom of Solomon"—written in Greek at Alexandria—we have the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the soul clearly taught. To this book we owe the sublime thought that the "souls of the righteous are in the hand of God,"[3] words that were hallowed by the

[1] Hag. ii. 9. [2] *Phædrus*, 247. [3] Wisdom iii. 1.

cry uttered in the darkness of Calvary, at the climax of the supreme sacrifice of the Incarnate Word — "Father, into Thy hands I commend My Spirit"; words which have lingered on in the Latin portion of the Western Church, to be repeated in her Compline Office night by night as she commits herself to the divine protection—"In manus Tuas Domine commendo spiritum meum"; words that echo around the bed of death when in our own Office the priest commends the departing soul to God, "as into the hands of a faithful Creator and most merciful Saviour."[1]

[1] "Visitation of the Sick" in the Book of Common Prayer.

VI.

The Witness of Ancient Greece and Rome

MORS REGNAVIT

A little mirth, a little song,
And then, farewell the merry throng :
A greeting, then a quick "Good-bye,"
And no reply.

A little laughter and some tears ;
A glance behind at happy years,
And then one beckons at the door,
And all is o'er.

A sunrise clouded ere the sun
Had scarce his wonted race begun :
A torch extinguished—save a spark,
And then the dark.

R. E. H.

VI.

The Witness of Ancient Greece and Rome

WE have seen that among the Hebrew people, at the close of the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament, the expectation of a resurrection of the body was the hope to which their thoughts were chiefly directed. It is only incidentally that we find in the Old Testament anything that helps us to form an idea of what the Jews thought about the intermediate state. The teaching contained in some of their uncanonical sacred Books is more definite as to the state of the disembodied soul, but on the whole we feel that, although there was a growing hope that the body would rise again at the last day, there was no dogmatic teaching on this subject, nothing that—to use a modern expression—could be called *de fide*.

We have now briefly to consider what was the belief as to the state of the dead among the Gentiles before the coming of Christ. It is sometimes objected that it is waste of time, or worse, to discuss what was taught and believed in the Pagan world. There might be some ground for this attitude towards pre-Christian speculation if it were not for the fact that GOD from

the first gave light to all His children, though in varying degrees. The "Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" enabled many among the great teachers of antiquity to come very near indeed to what we believe to be the truth. St. Paul did not hesitate to refer to the poets of "pagan" Greece and Rome when their witness could be quoted in support of the faith of the Gospel.[1]

The Fathers of the Church vary very much in their tone when speaking of the Pagan philosophers and the teaching of the poets and writers of the old world; but they agree in recognising the fact that there were many fragments of truth, many anticipations of the Gospel, to be found in the mythologies and philosophies of the past.

"The heathen philosophy," writes Clement of Alexandria, "is not deleterious to Christian life, and those who represent it as a school of error and immorality calumniate it, for it is light, the image of truth, and a gift which God has bestowed upon the Greeks; far from harming the truth by empty delusions, it but gives us another bulwark for the truth, and as a sister science helps to establish faith. Philosophy educated the Greeks, as the law educated the Jews, in order that both might be led to Christ." "He, therefore, who

[1] Acts xvii. 28. These poets were probably *Aratus* (B.C. 270), of Cilicia, St. Paul's own country; also *Cleanthes* (B.C. 300), of Assos in Troas (Hymn to Zeus). *Virgil*, 4 Georg.; *Cicero*. lib. 2 de Natura Deorum, etc. St. Thomas Aquinas calls the poets, Orpheus, Hesiod and Homer, "theological poets," *poetæ theologi*.

neglects the heathen philosophy," says Clement in another passage, "is like the fool who would gather grapes without cultivating the vineyard. But as the heathen mingle truth with falsehood, we must borrow wisdom from their philosophers as we pluck roses from thorns."

It is therefore with something more than mere idle curiosity that we turn to the past and ask what the ancient Greek world thought about death and a future life. We desire to see how far the enlightened reason of the noblest people of antiquity lends support to the Christian revelation as to the soul, its survival after death, its immortality and its eternal destiny. We seek to know how far the speculations of the great teachers of classical antiquity were accepted by the mass of the people; whether it could be said of them, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar."[1]

We have no doubt at all that the Gentiles who lived before the Gospel was preached will not be condemned hereafter for lack of a faith that they could not possibly have had. The very idea of such an undeserved punishment would clash with the elementary belief in the existence of God—for the Supreme Being must be just even before He is merciful.

We do not desire, then, to try and find some foregleams of the Christian faith in those who lived before

[1] Heb. xi. 13.

the Gospel, in order to justify a hope for the salvation of the pre-Christian world; no, that hope is based on something more sure—the justice of God. What we desire to do is to call a witness—if such a witness can be fairly found—to show that reason had led men to very much the same hope as that which has been more clearly given to us in what we call "revelation"—the faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, whether we turn to the far East and ask the ancient teachers of Asia what they thought about the survival of the soul after death and its future life, or whether we turn to ancient Greece and Rome, we shall find everywhere something more than a hope of another life—we shall find a belief in the life of the world to come. It is true that this belief was rather held as an opinion than as a dogma, and that there were very many who had no such belief will not of course be denied; but still the great teachers of both the East and West taught that the soul could survive the body; that its life after death was in a measure influenced by its life on earth; that there were in the nether world rewards and punishments; that a just judge determined the fate of each soul; that some souls were purified by suffering and then rewarded, while others were left in apparently endless woe.

The oldest hymns of Hinduism date back to about B.C. 2000 and are contained in the Rig-Veda. Vague as the doctrine about the future life is in these hymns, there is yet a clear witness as to a life continued after

death. It is, however, to Buddha, who has been deservedly called "the Light of Asia," and to the Brahman philosophers, that India owes the orthodox system of Hindu philosophy. The common belief, as far as it relates to the soul, may be gathered from *The Institutes of Manu*, a book only less authoritative than the Veda in that it makes no claim to inspiration.

From this volume we learn that the soul exists before its union with the body, and survives its separation from the body at death; that the consciousness of the soul depends upon its union with some bodily form; that the union of soul and body makes it possible for the soul to suffer; that the soul by repeated re-incarnation works its way towards that absorption into God in which it loses all separate existence as the drop loses itself in the ocean.

In Hinduism sacrifice for the dead holds an important place—not as a means, however, of obtaining immediate rest for the soul, but as the ordained way to provide the soul with an intermediate body, by which it may continue its progress through the temporary hells or heavens towards the needful re-incarnations and final rest of Nirvana.

We may learn from Homer what was perhaps the popular belief in ancient Greece before the rise of philosophy. He speaks of the soul as being an attenuated essence that escapes at death from the body and retains a shadowy form of the body. In the nether world the soul pursues a kind of dreamy repetition of

its life on earth. The loss of the body has reduced the soul to a pitiable, mindless state.

As to punishments and rewards, Homer supposes that great offenders are doomed to unavailing toil and the torment of unsatisfied desires. Still more terrible is the fate of those who are sent to Tartarus, with its iron gates and brazen floor—a fearful prison-house reserved for great criminals who have defied Almighty Zeus. The heroes of Homer's poems, on the contrary, do not descend to Hades, but are borne to the Islands of the Blest.

This teaching gathered from the Homeric poems is remarkably like that we have found in parts of the Old Testament and what we shall find in Jewish tradition. In both we notice that the soul, while surviving death, is reduced to a woeful state by the loss of the body. The likeness between the Jewish Gehenna and the Greek Tartarus is beyond question, and the same may be said of the Garden of Eden of Jewish eschatology and the Islands of the Blest in the classics.

We pass onwards four hundred years, and find in Plato a doctrine that is not far from the faith of Christendom; though having no hope of a resurrection of the body, Plato naturally teaches that the body is the great hindrance of the soul, and the supreme joy of the soul is to escape for ever from the body. Re-incarnation, Plato teaches, is a punishment; but while in this he agrees with the Hindu belief, he differs

altogether from it in claiming for the reward of the perfected soul a conscious individual existence, in which its noblest powers will be employed in the contemplation of the uncreated Beauty. The psychology of Plato is not a formal system, but he is quite clear that the soul survives the body,[1] is akin to the divine,[2] desires to escape from the body,[3] and go to its home with God.[4]

In the myths that relate to the life of the disembodied soul[5] the imagery varies, but the main drift of the teaching is the same. There is a judgment of the soul, followed either by reward or by punishment of varying duration. In the Stygian lake some souls—those who have lived neither well nor ill—endure remedial suffering; the incurably bad are hurled into Tartarus and "never come out," while criminals who are not hopelessly depraved fall into Tartarus and abide there until they obtain the pardon they desire from those they have injured. Those who have been notably righteous "go to their pure home which is above," and they who have followed philosophy depart to places fairer still and merit for ever to be freed from the body.[6]

We may remember that the teaching given to the world by Plato was within the reach of the authors of the deutero-canonical Scriptures. The Canon of the

[1] He taught also its pre-existence.
[2] *Phædo*, 79,
[3] *Phædrus*, 250. *Phædo*, 81–3.
[4] *Sym.*, 210–1. *Phædo*, 81.
[5] *Meno*, 86.
[6] *Phædo*, 113–4; *Republic*, 10, 621 A; *Phædrus*, 253; *Gorgias*, 523–4.

Old Testament ended in 397 B.C., and Socrates died 399 B.C., when Plato was about the age of thirty.

The Book of the Wisdom of Solomon, for example, was written in Greek at Alexandria, probably within a century before the Christian era. Its teaching bears unmistakable evidence of the influence of Greek philosophy —a marked contrast in this respect to the purely Hebrew Book, Ecclesiasticus. But it may well be asked how far the teaching of one so highly gifted as Plato, was assimilated by the popular mind of ancient Greece. Did the mass of the people believe in the survival of the soul after death? and if so, what sort of life did they think the soul lived in Hades?

To answer these questions we can hardly find any more satisfactory witness than that furnished by the brief epigrams collected in the Greek Anthology.[1]

Mr. Addington Symonds in his *Studies of the Greek Poets* writes: "The Anthology may from some points of view be regarded as the most valuable relic of antique literature which we possess. Composed of several

[1] About 200 B.C. the collection of the fragments contained in the Anthology was begun by Polemon. It was continued by others, and their various collections of epigrams were put together by Agathias, a Byzantine Greek of the age of Justinian. The collection, however, was not even then complete. Planudes, a monk of the fourteenth century, mutilated the collection of Cephalas, and but for the work of Claude de Saumise, 1606, who discovered in the Palatine Library at Heidelberg a copy of the Anthology of Cephalas and re-edited it, we should perhaps have lost many of the most beautiful, if not the most edifying, of the epigrams. I have used the new Firmin-Didot edition in Greek and Latin, Paris (vol. i. 1871, vol. ii. 1888).

thousand short poems, written for the most part in the elegiac metre, at different times and by a multitude of authors, it is coextensive with the whole current of Greek history, from the splendid period of the Persian War to the decadence of Christianised Byzantium. . . . The slight effusions of these minor poets are even nearer to our hearts than the masterpieces of the noblest Greek literature. They treat with a touching limpidity and sweetness of the joys and fears and hopes and sorrows that are common to all humanity. They introduce us to the actual life of a bygone civilization, stripped of its political or religious accidents, and tell us that the Greeks of Athens or of Sidon thought and felt exactly as we feel."

There are seven hundred and forty-eight "Sepulchral Epigrams."[1] Very many of these are graceful tributes to the departed — recalling briefly the story of life and the occasion of death — but showing neither belief in nor denial of a future life. It is only possible here to refer to a very few of the many that might be quoted as expressing belief in a life after death. For instance — in what Mr. Addington Symonds speaks of as "the silver language of Simonides" — we have the following literary epitaph for the grave of the poet Anacreon.[2]

[1] Ἐπιγράμματα ἐπιτύμβια — inscriptions on tombs. Some are merely literary exercises.

[2] Epigram 25. I have not attempted a literal translation of this or other epigrams. In each case where the translation is not my own I have given the name of the translator.

"In Teos born, in Teos rests Anacreon,
The immortal bard, who sweetly sang of youth and love.
Alas! How lonely and how sad is now his lot!
Sad, since in Lethe's drear abodes no sunlight falls,
But oh, more sad since he is now bereft of those
He fondly loved—Megistias, Smerdis and the rest:
These he has left behind, but still he tunes his lyre
To chant of love, and fills the shadowy land with song."

Here we have, at least, the picture of a life unbroken by death, though temporarily deprived of the fellowship which gave to life on earth its grace and joy.

The confident hope that the ties of earth would be renewed hereafter is touchingly dwelt upon in the following epigram on the tomb of a slave, whom his master had buried as a freeman.

"Only a slave, yea but a slave,
Yet thou, O master mine,
Thy foster-father slave hast placed
In this free tomb of thine.

"Long life to thee, and free from care!
When thou shalt come to me,
In Hades thou wilt find me still
A faithful slave to thee."[1]

The absence of the sunlight in Hades is very often dwelt upon. To the Greeks the sun was not only the great power that transfigured and beautified all nature, but also the symbol of their chief divinity. To be deprived of the sun was indeed to lose the brightness of life itself. On the tomb of a slave who—as often happened—was devoted to his master we read:

[1] Epig. 178.

"Life e'en in Hades, master, has no grief for me,
Since, though no sun shines there, I still shall live for thee."[1]

The same idea of life and influence carried into another sphere is found in one of the most beautiful of the epitaphs. It was composed by Plato for one of his disciples named Aster,[2] and plays upon the meaning of his name.

"Thou wert the morning star among the living
Ere thy fair light had fled;
Now, having died, thou art as Hesperus giving
New splendour to the dead."[3]

The strong human desire to be remembered by those who have gone into the silent land, is portrayed in an inscription which Mr. Addington Symonds considers perhaps the most beautiful of the sepulchral epigrams. The epigram itself is as follows:—

"This little stone, dear Sabinus, is a monument of our great friendship. I seek thee ever; if it be lawful among the dead, do thou refuse to drink the waters of Lethe as far as I am concerned."[4]

Mr. Symonds has expressed the thought of the epigram in the following beautiful paraphrase:—

"Of our great love, Parthenophil,
This little stone abideth still
Sole sign and token:
I seek thee yet, and yet shall seek,
Though faint mine eyes, my spirit weak
With prayers unspoken.

[1] Epigram 180. The Pal. Ant. reads "I shall live beneath thy sun," *i.e.* in thy favour.

[2] Ἀστήρ, a star.

[3] Epigram 670. Translation by SHELLEY.

[4] Epig. 346.

"Meanwhile, best friend of friends, do thou
If this the cruel fates allow,
By death's dark river,
Among those shadowy people, drink
No drop for me on Lethe's brink;
Forget me never!"

By far the greater number of the sepulchral epigrams that speak of a future life refer to it in terms similar to those already quoted. There are, however, some that breathe a more hopeful spirit, some that portray the life after death as not altogether gloomy and cheerless. Thus in the following lines we are reminded that the eschatology of ancient Greece had a hope for some of her children of a brighter life than that usually associated with the thought of Hades. For some there is the prospect of the calm enjoyment of the Isles of the Blessed, or of Heaven.

"Earth gave thee life, the sea that life destroyed,
The realms of Pluto then received thy soul;
And thence to heaven[1] thou didst wing thy way.
Not chance, in shipwreck, took away thy life,
But death beneath the waves was *sent* to thee
That not one realm of the immortal gods
Should lack thy presence, but earth, and sea, and sky,
And Pluto's dim and shadowy dwelling place,
Might each some glory from Pamphile gain."[2]

Or again, in the fine anonymous epitaph:—

"Earth in her breast hides Plato's dust: his soul
The blest immortals in their ranks enrol"[3]

[1] οὐρανόν. [2] Χθών σε τέκεν, vii. 587.
[3] Γαῖα μὲν, vii. 61, trans. J. A. Symonds.

—and the other epitaph which asks of the sculptured eagle on the tomb of Plato why it is there, and is answered :—

> "I am the image of swift Plato's spirit,
> Ascending Heaven: Athens does inherit
> His corpse below."[1]

On a boy's tomb we find the following :—

> "This grave now holds the youth Colocærus,
> Since his immortal soul forsook its home,
> And leaving earthly sorrow winged its way
> Onward and upward toward yon happy heaven.
> That there it might—free from the stains of earth—
> Find entry, and abide for ever pure."[2]

But seldom do we find so glad a hope as that expressed in the following epitaph :—

> "Thou art not dead, my Proté! thou art flown
> To a far country better than our own;
> Thy home is now an Island of the Blest;
> There 'mid Elysian meadows take thy rest:
> Or lightly trip along the flowery glade,
> Rich with the asphodels that never fade!
> Nor pain, nor cold, nor toil, shall vex thee more,
> Nor thirst nor hunger on that happy shore;
> Nor longings vain (now that blest life is won)
> For such poor days as mortals here drag on;
> To thee for aye a blameless life is given
> In the pure light of ever-present Heaven."[3]

In the original the last line and a half is even more Christian in tone than it appears in the poetical

[1] *Αἰετὲ, τίπτε*, vii. 62, trans. SHELLEY.

[2] Epig. 195. Appendix.

[3] *οὐκ ἔθανες*, trans. by J. A. SYMONDS, M.D. Ep 278 of Appendix (not in Palatine Anthology) to Jacobs' edition.

translation. It is: "Thou livest now in the pure light of Olympus near to the Supreme Being."

With these memorials of the past in our mind it is not too much to say that, although as a whole the Epigrams speak of death as the end of all that is joyous, and Hades as a place of gloom, yet they show that to many in ancient Greece the reality of the life of the world to come was a familiar thought; that hereafter it was hoped the dead would meet again and know one another; while, if the thought of the disembodied soul was usually associated with the belief that the life after death was a maimed and imperfect life, there are yet signs that to many of the old world a brighter hope was not unknown.

It may be noticed that in the epitaphs we have no mention of Tartarus, or of penal suffering after death. This, however, is no proof that the Greeks did not believe in the possibility of punishment hereafter. We have already referred to some of the passages in which Plato speaks of the future life as one in which there would be for some a penal discipline. It is needless to multiply quotations from the writings of poets and philosophers, as none will care to question the fact that many of them speak of the survival of the soul, or that some refer to its sufferings in Hades. We seldom, if ever, find any reference to "hell" in Christian epitaphs. In the abstract we may and do admit that a state of misery exists, but we never associate the thought of it with

those we have personally loved and lost. In a few of the sepulchral epigrams we read indeed that a certain pain of loss is felt by some of the dead. It is, however, very far from what Christians mean by the *pœna damni, i.e.* the loss of the presence of God. The pain of loss attributed by the Greeks to their departed is the suffering that arises from the loss of the body.[1] The soul is still a prey to its passions, but it is without the power to gratify them. It would be a mistake to suppose that the Greeks thought that this was a punishment; it was rather a sad misfortune intended to stir our pity for the dead, and the best that could be wished them would be the restoration of such of their lost faculties as would allow them once again to start upon the pursuit of those things that gave them pleasure upon earth. Thus in a literary epitaph on the poet Anacreon we are told that even the cold and cheerless abode of Hades could not chill the ardour of his love, but rather increased the warmth of his passionate affection for the friends he had been obliged to quit, so that he suffered greatly from their loss.[2]

It is not necessary to dwell at any length upon the

[1] The Philosophers, on the contrary, desired to be free from the body, as they regarded it as a great hindrance to spiritual life. This St. Paul also taught when he spoke of "this vile body"—the body of our humiliation—but he knew, what Plato did not, that the spiritual body of the risen life would be a fit instrument of the soul, and no longer weigh it down. See *Phædo* of Plato, 64–6, and 81.

[2] Epig. 30. The last line of the original is ὧν ὄλος ὠδίνεις Κύπριδι

witness to a future life found in the Latin authors of classical antiquity. In the main they may be said to have looked upon the survival of the soul as the Greeks did—that is to say, as an opinion. In the sixth book of the *Æneid* Virgil describes the nether world in much the same way as Dante portrayed it, with the exception that Virgil introduces the doctrine of metempsychosis. Thus he tells how "pious Æneas" and the Sibyl pass "through the lonesome night and through the gloom" across the Styx, having seen on their way thither the dread forms of Grief, Fear, Disease, and Death, and of Sleep, Death's own brother. The Furies, and maddening Discord with her snaky hair and blood-stained wreaths, have not barred their way, and the golden bough has won them passage across the Stygian flood in the bark of Charon "hideous in his squalor."

And now, having come to the "world of Shades, and of Sleep, and of slumberous Night," amid cries and loud wailing, onward by "the fields of mourning" they are

θερμοτέρη. The Latin version of the last two lines is as follows:—

"Neque Orcus tibi amores exstinxit, sed in Acherontis *domo*
Versans totus cruciaris calidiore venere."

Virgil has the same idea, with more of conscious pain and penalty implied, when he describes those in the Fields of Mourning (*lugentes campi*) as they "whom cruel love wastes with pining pain; whose sorrows do not leave them even in death—quos durus amor crudeli tabe peredit, . . .; curæ non ipsa in morte relinquunt." These in Dryden's words are they who:—

" . . . pining with desire
Lament too late their unextinguished fire."

Æneid, Book vi. 441.

led to the dread prison-house of Tartarus, encircled by a rushing river whose waves are liquid fire. Here Æneas may not enter, since it is decreed that "none that is holy may tread the threshold of the wicked." The Sibyl, however, describes the awful tortures that are endured by the unhappy souls, but language fails her, and she concludes with the declaration—

> "Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues,
> And throats of brass inspired with iron lungs,
> I could not half those horrid crimes repeat,
> Nor half the punishments those crimes have met."[1]

In sadness the seer passes on, and at last comes to "pleasant places and smiling lawns, to joyous groves and the homes of the blessed." Here the warm sunlight falls, and the purple tints of the atmosphere blend the verdant meadows with the canopy of heaven. In sport and song the heroes and the fair children of the warrior races of old pass a happy life.

But it is not until Æneas meets with the spirit of Anchises that he learns the meaning of all that he sees. The old man explains to him the doctrine of the soul of the universe, which penetrates all things, and is stained by its indwelling in the human body—

> "Hence wild desires and grovelling fears,
> And human laughter, human tears;
> Immured in dungeon-seeming night,
> They look abroad, yet see no light."[2]

[1] Dryden's version.

[2] Translator unknown. Plato's theory was that punishment had a two-fold purpose—to reform and to deter. "No one punishes an offender on

But this injury to the soul is not, the poet says, at once healed by death:

> "Nay, when at last the life has fled,
> And left the body cold and dead,
> E'en then there passes not away
> The painful heritage of clay;
> Full many a long contracted stain
> Perforce must linger deep in grain.
> So penal sufferings they endure
> For ancient crime, to make them pure;
> Some hang aloft in open view,
> For winds to pierce them through and through,
> While others purge their guilt deep-dyed
> In burning fire or whelming tide."[1]

We have here a doctrine very similar to that which—with certain additions—became known as the "Romish doctrine concerning purgatory,"[2] as a state of penal torture. It would seem, like much else, to have been inherited by the Papacy from pagan Rome, and to be the distorted expression of a great truth. But of this we shall have more to say in a later chapter. There is one point, however, that must not be passed over in entire silence, and that is the prevalence of religious rites that ancient Greece and Rome were wont to offer for the

account of the past offence, and simply because he has done wrong, but for the sake of the future, that the offence may not be committed again, either by the same person or anyone who has seen him punished . . . mere retribution is for beasts, not men." See *Protagoras*, 324, b.; Leges xi. 934; and Grote's *Plato*, ii. 270.

[1] Translator unknown.

[2] In Chapter xiv. I distinguish, of course, between dogma and the popular doctrine of Purgatory.

dead. Among these rites even the burial of the body was not unconnected with the repose of the soul. It was to plead for his burial that Patroklos appeared to his friend Achilles and stood over him all the night wailing and making moan, saying, "Bury me with all speed, that I may pass the gates of Hades. Far off the spirits banish me the phantoms of men outworn, nor suffer me to mingle with them beyond the river, but vainly I wander along beside the wide-gated dwelling of Hades. Now give me, I pray pitifully of thee, thy hand, for never more again shall I come back from Hades, when ye have given me my due of fire." And when the funeral pyre was ready Achilles did everything as his friend had desired, mindful "that he was speeding a noble comrade unto the realm of Hades." Thus we might trace the custom of funeral rites and of prayer and sacrifice for the departed down the ages from remote antiquity to the Christian era. Cicero argued from the well-known universality of such rites that men must have believed that the soul survived the death of the body.[1] To sum up, we may say that both ancient Greece and Rome were familiar with the belief that (1) the soul survives the death of the body; (2) that the incurably wicked suffer punishments that are very

[1] See *De Amicitia* and *De Senectute*. Tacitus, *Agricola*, c. 46, and Lucretius, *De Nat.* There was, no doubt, a widespread scepticism as to a future life among the Greeks and Romans. The very writers who argue for a survival of the soul show they were opposed to much that was taught. Juvenal goes so far as to say that in his time even boys hardly believed in a spirit world.

prolonged, if not endless; (3) that the sin-stained but not utterly depraved dead also suffer for a time and are afterwards pardoned; (4) that the heroes and good men are rewarded and enjoy a life of such happiness as the loss of the body makes possible.

We have now to see how in all probability this Gentile belief influenced the growth of Jewish tradition, and through the Jews helped to form the traditions of Christendom.

VII.

Witness of Jewish Tradition

CHRONOLOGY FROM CLOSE OF THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TO THE CHRISTIAN ERA

B.C.

469. Socrates born.
432. Prophecy of Malachi.
429. Plato born.
399. Socrates died.

Dominion of Greece, B.C. 333–167.

332. Jerusalem submits to Alexander the Great. This ends the Persian Domination, which began B.C. 536 at the fall of Babylon. Alexandria is founded, and a great number of Jews settle there.
320. Palestine subject to Egypt.
284. Septuagint begun at Alexandria.
201. Colonies of Jews from Babylon transplanted to Asia Minor.
169. Antiochus Epiphanes profanes the Temple at Jerusalem.
168. The Daily Sacrifice is taken away.
167. Matthias the Maccabee revolts.

Dominion of Asmoneans, B.C. 167–63.

166. Victory of Judas Maccabæus.
165. Re-dedication of Temple.
161. Asmonean line begins.
146. Greece becomes a Roman Province.
109. First mention of Pharisees and Sadducees, the Pharisees representing strict Hebraism, the Sadducees the extreme of Hellenism.
63. Pompey takes Jerusalem.

Dominion of Idumean Antipater and Herod, B.C. 63-4.

47. Julius Cæsar appoints Antipater procurator of Judæa. Antipater appoints his son Herod to be governor of Galilee.
40. Herod made king of Judæa.
39. Horace born.
31. Augustus, Emperor.
24. Virgil writes the Æneid.
19. Herod destroys and rebuilds the Temple.
4. Herod dies at Jericho soon after the Nativity of Jesus Christ.

VII.

Witness of Jewish Tradition

IT would be a great mistake to suppose that we can pass at once from the Old to the New Testament. Between them there is a gap of nearly four centuries, and it is the knowledge of the beliefs that took definite form during that period that alone can enable us to gauge the meaning of much of the teaching given to the world by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. But in order to trace the influence that moulded the traditional belief prevalent at the time of the Incarnation we must follow the political history of the Jews. We must trace the influence of the Gentile world upon Judaism, and see how God used this influence to prepare the Jew for the fuller knowledge of the Gospel, and out of the national exclusiveness of Judaism brought the world-wide unity of the Catholic Church. All that we are concerned with here, however, is a brief summary of the theories as to the future life more or less current among the Jews at the time of the Incarnation.

The Persian dominion over the Jews, which had lasted for 230 years, was brought to an end by the submission of Jerusalem to Alexander the Great, who had already

overthrown the power of Media and Persia. The European and Asiatic races were united by Alexander under one Empire; this led to the diffusion of the Greek language, first as the common vehicle of communication in the East, and ultimately throughout the whole civilised world. But it was more especially in the foundation of Alexandria—destined to become the centre of the three continents of the old world, and the meeting-place in which Hebrew religion and Greek philosophy were to be united—that Alexander most profoundly affected the history of Judaism and even of Christianity.

We have seen how in the Old Testament there is but a vague and shadowy teaching as to the survival of the spirit after the death of the body; how, when the future life is spoken of, the spirit is represented as dwelling in a dim and joyless place, wrapped in something like an unquiet sleep, deprived of all that could make existence worth having—neither enjoying rewards nor suffering penalties. This teaching was, however, in consequence of Greek influence, greatly modified in the deutero-canonical books.

About the time when Malachi uttered his prophecy and gave to Jerusalem the last of the canonical Scriptures of the Old Testament, Greece was also given the sublime teaching of Socrates.

"In studying the character and life of Socrates we know that we are contemplating the most remarkable moral phenomenon in the ancient world; we are

conscious of having climbed the highest point of the ascent of Gentile virtue and wisdom; we find ourselves in a presence which invests with a sacred awe its whole surroundings. We feel that here alone, or almost alone, in the Grecian world, we are breathing an atmosphere, not merely moral, but religious, not merely religious (it may be a strong expression, yet we are borne out by the authority of the earliest Fathers of the Church), but Christian. . . . Not only in the hope" expressed in the Hebrew annals "of a Prince of the House of David, or an Elijah returning from the invisible world, who should set right the wrong and deliver the oppressed, but in the still small voice that was heard by the Ilissus or on the quays of the Piræus was there a call for another Charmer who might come when Socrates was gone—even amongst the Barbarian races—one who should be sought for far and wide, 'for there is no better way of using money than to find such an one.' Not only in the Man of Sorrows, as depicted by the Evangelical Prophet, but in the anticipations of the Socratic dialogues, there was the vision, even to the very letter, of the Just Man, scorned, despised, condemned, tortured, slain, by an ungrateful or stupid world, yet still triumphant. And yet a higher strain is heard. No doubt the Egyptian monuments speak of another life, and the Grecian mythology and poetry spoke of Tartarus and Elysium and the Isles of the Blessed. No doubt the Hebrew Psalmists and Prophets contained aspirations for a bright hereafter, and also dim imagery of the

underworld of the grave. But in the dialogue of Socrates in the prison,[1] the conviction of a future existence is urged--whatever may be thought of the arguments—with an impressive earnestness which has left a more permanent mark on the world, and of which the Jewish mind, hitherto so dark and vacant on this momentous topic, was destined henceforth to become the ready recipient and the chief propagator."[2]

The signs of this influence of the great Grecian Prophet and of his disciple Plato upon Judaism are found, partly in the deutero-canonical writings that to some extent fill the gap between the Old and New Testaments, and partly in the traditions embodied in the other sacred books of the Jews.[3]

The association of the deutero-canonical books with the Scriptures of the Old Testament only became possible when the students of Alexandria under Ptolemy Philadelphus had given to the world the Septuagint Greek version of the canonical books.[4] Hebrew literature had almost ceased, and any attempted additions to the sacred writings were neces-

[1] *Phædo*, Plato.

[2] *The Jewish Church*, STANLEY, vol. iii., pp. 220, 226.

[3] It is remarkable that, after the close of the Canon, it is in the Gentile rather than in the Jewish literature that we find hope of a Deliverer and Example of righteousness, and the coming of the Golden Age. There is no reference to the hope of a Messiah in the Apocrypha. About a century before Christ this hope was indeed revived, as is witnessed by the Book of Enoch, the Psalms of Solomon and the Sibylline Oracles.

[4] The "books of Moses" were probably translated first, as these books were considered inspired in a more full sense than even the Prophets. Gradually and at intervals the other books were translated. The Pales-

sarily introduced as supplementary to the Greek rather than to the Hebrew Bible. The Septuagint became the effective instrument for the removal of the barrier that existed between the Gentile and the Jew. Moreover, Greek settlements were planted throughout Palestine, and even under the very shadow of the Temple in Jerusalem a Greek gymnasium—with its distinctive games—was instituted. The dress, manners, and even morals of Greece were adopted by the Jews of the holy city and encouraged by the High Priests. The time came when the question had to be decided whether Judaism should continue to exist as a distinct form of religion, or become a rationalised Paganism. This question was decided by the success of the Chasidim—"the pious" or strict Hebrew section afterwards represented by the Pharisees—in their struggle against the attempt of Antiochus to stamp out Judaism. The Asmonean dominion represented by the noble family of the Maccabees delivered the Jews from Gentile oppression, and raised them once more to something of their former glory.

But if the Maccabean rule delivered the Jew from the danger of complete Hellenisation, the liberation from a foreign yoke was short-lived. Greece herself fell before the all-conquering Roman power, and in

tinian collectors refused all books as canonical that were written after the ceasing of prophecy. In Egypt this was not felt to be necessary, and the Alexandrian Jews associated the "apocryphal" books with the Septuagint. Hence they are reckoned in the Alexandrian Canon, but *not* in the Jewish or Palestinian.

146 B.C. became a Roman Province. It was not probable that Palestine could escape subjugation by the armies of Rome. Pompey the Great with his legions was soon before the walls of Jerusalem, and after a noble resistance the holy city was taken, and the inner shrine of the Temple—the Holy of Holies—was entered by the victorious Roman conqueror. The multitude of Jews that were led by Pompey in his triumph to Rome formed the nucleus of the future Roman Church. From the Asmonean family the power eventually passed in reality to Rome, although it was exercised through the Herods. Herod the Great—who was "by birth an Idumean, by profession a Jew, by necessity a Roman, by culture and by choice a Greek"—at the death of his father, Antipater, managed to ingratiate himself with Mark Antony and Octavianus, and in 40 B.C. was appointed King of Judæa. Herod died at Jericho shortly after the birth of Jesus Christ, in the reign of the Emperor Cæsar Augustus.

It will be seen, even from this rough outline of a period of constant change, how the dominion of Greece —following that of Persia—was the most enduring. It lasted about one hundred and sixty-six years, while the Asmonean period continued one hundred and four, and the Herodian only fifty-nine. It must moreover be noted that the effects of the Grecian domination were never entirely obliterated during the subsequent changes of government.

As regards the teaching of the Jewish Church, at the

time of the Incarnation the Synagogue had no system of doctrines regularly elaborated into a creed. The two main dogmas of Judaism were the being and unity of God, and the claim of the Scriptures to implicit belief and obedience. "In its general aspect," writes Dr. Edersheim, "Judaism was a vast system of rationalism, which according to the bent of different minds took the direction of traditionalism, of scepticism, or of mysticism. The only settled thing was the letter of the law, the text of the Commandments. The meaning and application of the latter formed subject for inquiry. The doctrines, or the spiritual import of the Bible were, except when they seemed directly to contravene the general teaching of the Synagogue, left unsettled and to the free choice of every individual. . . . Jewish traditionalism took the threefold direction, which indeed seems inherent to human thinking, of pure adherence to the letter of tradition, of scepticism, and of mysticism, the latter being the more healthy reaction of the other two extremes, and containing the most numerous remains of genuine spiritual elements. Before these tendencies appeared in the schools, they were embodied in the rival sects of Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes."[1]

It is a point of great importance in the study of Judaism generally, and of Jewish traditionalism in particular, to bear in mind that the outward observances, and not the doctrines of the Bible, formed the subject of authoritative teaching.

[1] *Hist. of Jewish Nation*, p. 408.

From this fact it is clear that we cannot expect to find any doctrine of the future state universally accepted among the Jews. The rigidly orthodox—the Pharisees—believed in angels and spirits, and looked for a resurrection of the body—a literal resurrection of the natural body "with the same infirmities and diseases" to which it had been subject on earth, but which the hand of the Lord would remove;[1] the sceptical Jews, represented by the Sadducees, denied the existence of angels and spirits, and the doctrine of the resurrection; on the other hand, the mystical school represented by the Essenes—who later on became merged in the theological school of the Kabbalah[2]—taught the pre-existence and transmigration of souls, the existence of angels, and a final restitution of all things, in which Satan and the evil spirits would share.

We have seen that in the Old Testament there are many references to the fact that the soul survives the body, and passes after death into Sheol. We have not, however, found any clear proof in the Scriptures of the Old Testament that in Sheol there was thought to be a distinction between the condition of the righteous and the wicked. In the later books, as we have seen, a

[1] *Hist. of Jewish Nation*, p. 339.

[2] The Kabbalah (a word meaning "reception," or a "doctrine received" by oral tradition) became the name of a mystical school whose doctrine was of Jewish origin. It professed to explain the hidden meaning of the Old Testament. The secrets of this system were supposed to have been revealed by God, taught by Angels to Adam, and handed down by tradition. The psychology of the Kabbalah resembled Platonism in some respects.

hope of escape from Sheol is held before the righteous, and in one late author the wicked also are raised, but only to become the prey of shame and contempt. The deutero-canonical books add but little to this revelation concerning the future state, and this is perhaps strange, as there is certainly an advance in the language used as to angels and demons. Again, the statement that "God created man to be immortal and made him to be an image of His own eternity; nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world,"[1] is not without its value in reference to the story of the creation and fall of man. The belief in a resurrection of the body is indeed dwelt upon with some insistence in the Second Book of the Maccabees,[2] where we read that those who were killed in battle were found to have been slain in punishment, because "under the coats of every one that was slain they found things consecrated to the idols of the Jamnites, which is forbidden the Jews by the law." For these sinners—cut off suddenly in their sin —prayer and sacrifice are offered. Judas Maccabeus, it is said, sent money to Jerusalem for a sin offering, "doing therein very well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection: for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And also in that he perceived that there was great favour laid up for those that died godly, it was an holy and good thought. Whereupon he made a reconcilia-

[1] Wisdom ii. 23, 24. [2] 2 Macc. xii. 39–45.

tion for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin." But here it is evident that the prayers and sacrifices were offered for the deliverance of the slain from sin in the far-off day of resurrection, rather than for the immediate repose of their souls in Sheol. Moreover, the Second Book of the Maccabees is of late date, written probably at the close of the second or early in the first century B.C.[1] When we turn to the Jewish apocryphal books[2] written before or soon after the beginning of the Christian era, we find that different states of disembodied souls are mentioned. The wicked are for the first time represented as already tormented, and the place or state of torment is named Gehenna. On the other hand, the righteous are spoken of as

[1] The emphasis on the doctrine of the Resurrection suggests sympathy with the Pharisees. The book is considered very inferior to 1 Macc. See Grim's *Commentary*, 1857, and *Speaker's Commentary*. An attempt has been made by some Protestant writers to nullify the argument in favour of prayers for the dead that is often based upon this passage. It is said that the Egyptian Jews were schismatic in their practices, and hence the "opinion of the Egyptian Jews—when unsupported by other evidence—cannot be regarded as satisfactory evidence in proof of the doctrine or practices of the Jews in Palestine." See *The Intermediate State*, by C. H. Wright, D.D. As, however, it is admitted that "the Jews have for centuries offered up prayers for the dead," and no sort of evidence is forthcoming to prove that the Jews are mistaken in maintaining that the practice is "one of the institutions handed down by the Jewish fathers" (p. 150), all that can be said is that the passage confirms the statement made by the modern Jews as to the antiquity of their prayers for the departed.

[2] Among these Pseudepigraphic writings are: *The Book of Enoch*, quoted by St. Jude (verses 14, 15); *Sibylline Oracles; 4th Esdras; Apocalypse of Baruch; the Targums; the 3rd and 4th Books of Maccabees*. The writings of Josephus also contain information as to the prevalent Jewish beliefs.

enjoying their reward. As there was no dogmatic teaching given by the Synagogue, we find endless grotesque beliefs and theories put forward by different Rabbis, but the consent of those who believed in the survival of the soul gathers around the two divisions of Hades—the place of torment and the place of enjoyment. In other words, Hades is the whole realm of the dead, and its two main divisions are called Gehenna and Paradise.[1] Heaven was not thought of as the abode of the disembodied souls of the righteous: it was reserved for the Jews after the final resurrection of the body.

The Book of Enoch—the earlier part of which dates probably from the second century before Christ, and the remainder from the Christian era[2]—has been called the "Divina Commedia" of Judaism. In chapter xxii. of that book, which resembles the *Inferno* of Dante, the seer is shown "the castigation and torment of those who eternally execrate, and whose souls are punished and bound there for ever and ever." The Valley of Hinnom and its ghastly associations were ready to supply images to the Jew, terrible beyond any that the mind of heathen poet or philosopher had conceived. Already known as the perpetual abode of corruption and fire, "the place where lie the corpses of those who have transgressed against Jehovah," of which

[1] Paradise was also called Gan Eden, and Abraham's Bosom.

[2] See *Cambridge Companion to the Bible* and Dr. EDERSHEIM'S *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 653.

it was said, "their worm shall not die, neither shall the fire be quenched," it had become the symbol of utter moral ruin and depravity. But it was the unknown author of the Book of Enoch who first saw it as "the accursed of the accursed for ever," who first placed in that dark ravine one of the mouths of hell, and thus, from the emblem of moral ruin attending sin, made it the actual place of punishment for sinners.[1] Henceforth Gehenna became known as part of Hades or Sheol. The Book of Enoch declares that the "accursed valley is for those who are accursed to eternity: here must all be collected who speak unseemly speeches towards God, and speak insolently of His glory: here they are collected, and here is the place of their punishment, and in the last time there shall the spectacle of a righteous judgment upon them be given before the righteous to eternity for evermore."[2] Again, "I saw then how a deep was opened in the midst of the earth, full of fire, and they brought thither those blinded sheep; and they were all judged and found guilty and were cast into that fiery pit and they burned."[3] . . . This torment is spoken of frequently as that which "lasts to eternity,"[4] "for ever and ever,"[5] "for all eternity,"[6] "for all generations into eternity."[7]

In the Fourth Book of Esdras—written about the end of the first century after Christ—we read, "A lake of fire shall appear, and over against it a place of rest:

[1] See *Encyc. Britt.*, viii., p. 536. [2] Book of Enoch, xxvii.
[3] *Ibid.*, xc. [4] *Ibid.*, xci. [5] *Ibid.*, vi. [6] *Ibid.*, liii. [7] *Ibid.*, ciii.

and the oven of Gehenna shall be shown, and over against it a Paradise of delight . . . here is pleasure and rest, and there fire and torments."

These passages are typical of a multitude that might be quoted to the same effect from other books already mentioned.

Passing from the apocryphal writings, we may conclude with a reference to the doctrine of the future life put forward by the two great Jewish schools of Shammai and Hillel. In their teaching we notice the possibility both of penal suffering, of which no end is seen, and also of purgatorial pain, that is only for a time. The school of Shammai "arranged all mankind into three classes: the perfectly righteous, who are 'immediately written and sealed to eternal life'; the perfectly wicked, who are 'immediately written and sealed to Gehenna'; and an intermediate class, 'who go down to Gehinnom, and moan, and come up again,' according to Zechariah xiii. 9, and which seemed also indicated in certain words on the Song of Hannah.[1] The careful reader will notice that this statement implies belief in Eternal Punishment on the part of the School of Shammai. For (1) the perfectly wicked are spoken of as 'written and sealed unto Gehenna'; (2) the School of Shammai expresssly quotes, in support of what it teaches about these wicked, Daniel xii. 2, a passage which undoubtedly refers to the final Judgment after the Resurrection; (3) the perfectly wicked, so punished, are expressly

[1] 1 Sam. ii. 6.

distinguished from the third, or intermediate class, who merely 'go down to Gehinnom,' but are not 'written and sealed,' and 'come up again.'

"Substantially the same, as regards Eternity of Punishment, is the view of the School of Hillel. In regard to sinners of Israel and of the Gentiles it teaches, indeed, that they are tormented in Gehenna for twelve months, after which their bodies and souls are burnt up and scattered as dust under the feet of the righteous; but it significantly excepts from this number certain classes of transgressors 'who go down to Gehinnom and are punished there to ages of ages.' That the Niphal form of the verb used, כירוכין, must mean 'punished' and not 'judged,' appears, not only from the context, but from the use of the same word and form in the same tractate (Rosh haSh, 12 *a*, lines 7, etc., from top), when it is said of the generation of the Flood that 'they were punished'—surely not 'judged'—by 'hot water.' However, therefore, the School of Hillel might accentuate the mercy of God, or limit the number of those who suffer Eternal Punishment, it *did* teach Eternal Punishment in the case of some. And this is the point in question.

"But since the Schools of Shammai and Hillel represented the theological teaching in the time of Christ and His Apostles, it follows that the doctrine of Eternal Punishment was that held in the days of our Lord, however it may have afterwards been modified."[1]

[1] EDERSHEIM'S *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, vol. ii. 789.

That these beliefs were denied by the Sadducees is quite true, but there can be no doubt that they were the belief of the orthodox Jews and of the bulk of the people. Josephus says that the Pharisees "believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as men have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and that the latter were to be detained in an everlasting prison,[1] but that the former have power to revive and live again; on account of which doctrines they are able greatly to persuade the body of the people"; and he says that the Sadducees "when they become magistrates . . . addict themselves to the notions of the Pharisees, because the multitude would not otherwise bear them."[2]

In his book on "The Wars of the Jews," Josephus further describes the teaching of the Pharisees. He writes: "They say that all souls are incorruptible, but that the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies, and that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment."[3] In writing of the Essenes, he says: "Their doctrine is this: that bodies are corruptible, and that the matter they are made of is not permanent; but that the souls are immortal, and continue for ever; and that they come out of the most

[1] There is no doubt that the later Rabbis from the second century of the Christian era very generally denied the eternity of punishment. Dr. Adler writes: "With respect to the Rabbis of the present day (nineteenth century), I think it would be safe to say that *they do not teach endless* retributive suffering." See Dr. EDERSHEIM'S *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, p. 790.

[2] *Antiquities*, xviii. 1, 3, 4.

[3] Book II., chap. viii. 14.

subtile air, and are united to their bodies as to prisons, into which they are drawn by a certain natural enticement; but that when they are set free from the bonds of the flesh, they then, as released from a long bondage, rejoice and mount upward. And this is like the opinion of the Greeks, that good souls have their habitations beyond the ocean, in a region that is neither oppressed with storms of rain, or snow, or with intense heat; but that this place is such as is refreshed by the gentle breathing of a west wind, that is perpetually blowing from the ocean; while they allot to bad souls a dark and tempestuous den, full of never-ceasing punishments. And indeed the Greeks seem to me to have followed the same notion, when they allot the islands of the blessed to their brave men, whom they call heroes and demi-gods; and to the souls of the wicked, the region of the ungodly, in Hades, where their fables relate that certain persons, such as Sisyphus, and Tantalus, and Ixion, and Tityus, are punished; which is built on this first supposition, that souls are immortal; and thence are those exhortations to virtue, and dehortations from wickedness, collected, whereby good men are bettered in the conduct of their life by the hope they have of reward after their death, and whereby the vehement inclinations of bad men to vice are restrained, by the fear and expectation they are in, that although they should lie concealed in this life, they should suffer immortal punishment after their death."

In the Talmud we read: "The sinners of Israel in

their body, and the sinners of the nations in their body, go down to Gehenna and are punished there twelve months; after twelve months their body is consumed, and their soul burned, and the wind scattereth them under the feet of the righteous."

There is no mention here of a temporary punishment in Gehenna for those who had sinned but not hopelessly. In spite, however, of the discordant teaching and inextricable confusion of the Rabbis in matters of detail, it is abundantly clear that such a purification was believed possible both by the learned and by the people as a whole. Dr. Edersheim, writing of the beliefs among the Jews at the time of the Incarnation, says: "There is a kind of purgation, if not of purgatory, after death. Some even" of the Rabbis "have held the annihilation of the wicked. Taking the widest and most generous views of the Rabbis, they may be thus summed up: All Israel have a share in the world to come; the pious among the Gentiles also have part in it. Only the perfectly just enter at once into Paradise; all the rest pass through a period of purification and perfection, variously lasting, up to one year.[1] But notorious breakers of the law, and especially apostates from the Jewish faith, and heretics, have no hope what-

[1] Dr. Pusey writes: "What is of moment is, that this period of *twelve months* of purgatory for the Jew was invented by Rabbi Akiba alone, and received on his authority, 86 years after the Ascension of our Lord, and so has no bearing on this teaching." It is difficult to reconcile this statement with the fact that the School of Hillel taught the twelve months purgatory followed by destruction, and Hillel flourished about the time of Herod the Great and was grandfather of Gamaliel.

ever, either here or hereafter. Such is the last word which the Synagogue has to say to mankind."[1]

No principle was more clearly established in the popular mind than that, through the merits of Abraham, all Israel had a right to the world to come. Abraham was frequently represented as sitting at the gate of Gehenna to deliver any Israelite who might otherwise have been consigned to its terrors.[2] We must not forget that according to Jewish belief the everlasting punishments of Gehenna were seldom thought of as happening to any of the chosen people of God. Rather the idea of Gehenna was that of a place to which the Lord God would consign the Gentiles, whereas the covenant of circumcision and the merits of the Fathers would in the day of the Messiah liberate any Israelite sinner from that "accursed valley." In Rabbinic language the Gentiles were the "children of Gehinnom," but Israelites were the "children of the kingdom," "royal children," "children of God." Our Lord's reversal of their expected position in the Judgment must have indeed been an outrage upon the Judaism of His hearers; for He taught that the "accursed children" should sit down "with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven," but the "children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In reference, then, to Jewish belief about that part of

[1] *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, p. 180.

[2] Dr. Edersheim gives numerous references in proof of this belief.

Hades known as Gehenna, we find it was supposed to be a place of torment, into which all sinners were cast, but whence all but a few of the worst Israelites were eventually delivered. Those who were not delivered remained there "for ever and ever"; some were punished and then annihilated.

As to the question of prayer for the dead among the Jews at the time of the Incarnation, there can be no reasonable doubt that it was an accepted practice, though, like almost every other practice, it was not universal; the passage already quoted from the Second Book of Maccabees is but one proof of the prevalence of the custom. Professor Plumptre writes: "There is no room to doubt that they (the Jews) looked on the state of the dead as one capable of being influenced for good by the prayers of the living. Prayers for the dead were an established part of the ritual of the Synagogue at the time of the Maccabees; and, in that of the temple, sacrifices were added to the prayers."[1] And again, "there can scarcely be a shadow of doubt that such prayers (for the dead) were offered in every synagogue, or repeated by mourning kinsmen to whom the duty of right belonged, during the whole period covered by the Gospels and the Acts. The inscriptions in the Jewish cemeteries at Rome, with their brief supplications for peace, tell the same tale; as also do those from a Jewish cemetery in the Crimea,[2] the

[1] *Spirits in Prison.* E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D., pp. 127–8.

[2] Later research makes the dates of the inscriptions very doubtful. The Crimean inscriptions cannot be relied upon as *certainly* genuine inscriptions of the first three centuries.

inscriptions in both cases being of the first or second centuries after Christ. . . . According to the rules of the Rabbis it was the duty of the son or next of kin to say the *Kaddisch*, or prayer for the soul of the deceased, for eleven months after his death, the limit of time being clearly connected with the thought of the twelve months of corrective punishment in Gehenna, as taught by Hillel and Shammai and Akiba."[1] The later doctrine of Akiba is probably a development rather than an explanation of the teaching of Hillel.[2] He represents the righteous interceding for those whose twelve months of purgatory is complete: "Forthwith the righteous go and stand on the dust of the wicked and pray for mercy upon them, and God maketh them stand upon their feet from the dust, from beneath the soles of the feet of the righteous, and bringeth them to the life of the world to come." Therefore it is said, "And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be dust under the soles of your feet";[3] words that recall those of the Psalmist: "They [men] are appointed as a flock for Sheol; death shall be their shepherd: and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning."[4] The above passage from Rabbi Akiba seems to imply that there is a resurrection for the individual Jew twelve months after his death, but it is an impossible task to reconcile the contradictory teachings of the later Rabbis. There can, however, be no doubt that prayer for the

[1] *Spirits in Prison.* E. H. PLUMPTRE, D.D., pp. 127–8.
[2] See p. 125. [3] Mal. iv. 3. [4] Psalm xlix. 14.

dead was offered by the Jews, at any rate, just before the time of the Incarnation, and has continued to be offered from that time down to the present day. Such prayers were, it may be well to state, never offered for the souls in Paradise, but for those in the torments of Gehenna, that they may attain to the society of the Blessed in Paradise. In the usage of modern Judaism we find this prayer: "May God in His mercy remember M. or N., for the welfare of whose soul I this day offer —— (*sum of money, to be vested in works of mercy*). May his soul be united in eternal life with the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, and other holy men and women in the Garden of Eden."[1]

That this practice among the Jews dates back to a time beyond the Christian era is certain. It is also most improbable that the Jews would have borrowed the custom from the Christian Church, and—as we shall see—there is no doubt that prayer for the dead prevailed in the Church from the first centuries. As Dr. Plumptre says: "The inference is accordingly natural and legitimate that prayers for the dead, which we find in both (in Judaism and the Christian Church), were derived from an earlier source, prior to the time of the separation, *i.e.*, from the earlier traditions of the Jewish Church, which passed without question and without blame into those of the Christian. How far these traditions went back we cannot determine. The

[1] McCaul, *Old Paths*, p. 408.

Maccabean history gives us one fixed date with certainty, but the practice may have existed much earlier, probably after and during the Captivity."[1] It is highly probable that, as contact with Greek thought in Alexandria and elsewhere gave to the Jews a more clear conception of the immortality of the soul, so also to Gentile influence was due the legitimate expression of this belief in prayer for the souls of the departed. Faith leads to hope, and love expresses in prayer the hope that faith inspires. The Jewish belief as to the condition of the "perfectly righteous" and those who had been purified in Gehenna, was also evidently the result of Gentile influence. The inspired records of the Old Testament revealed nothing more than that all souls were committed to Sheol — the unseen nether world. But no sooner do we pass from the Old Testament to the New than we find a very marked separation between the souls of the imperfect and the souls of the "righteous"—and that too before the resurrection, and immediately after death. The Targums and the Talmud teach that both Paradise[2] and Gehenna were created before the world. One quotation from the Jerusalem Targum (on Gen. iv. 24) will be sufficient: "Two thousand years," we read, "before the world was made, God created the Law, and Gehenna, and the Garden of Eden. He made the Garden of Eden for the righteous, that they might

[1] *Spirits in Prison*, p. 269.

[2] The adoption of the word "Paradise" was probably due to Persian influence.

eat of the fruits thereof, and delight themselves in them, because in this world they had kept the commandments of the Law. But for the wicked He prepared Gehenna, which is like a sharp two-edged destroying sword. He put within it sparks of fire and burning coals, to punish the wicked in the world to come, because they had not observed the commandments of the Law in this world. For the Law is the tree of life. Whosoever observeth it shall live and subsist as the tree of life."[1]

Paradise and Gehenna were supposed to be contiguous, only separated, it was said, and perhaps allegorically, by a handbreadth. When we compare these Jewish beliefs with those already referred to[2] that were taught by Socrates, Plato, and others among the Greeks and Latins, we find that they are almost identical. The Greek Tartarus is the same as the Jewish Gehenna, and in both it was thought some were "eternally"[3] and others temporarily punished. The Islands of the Blest were—as Josephus remarks—the Greek idea from which the Jew borrowed his picture of Gan Eden, or Paradise. To the Greek the society of the heroes formed one of the delights of those Elysian fields, and to the Jew also the hope was to be with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the heroes—

[1] For Josephus' account of the belief of the Essenes as to the lot of the righteous, see p. 123.

[2] Chap. vi.

[3] Virgil's words come to mind where he says: "Sedet æternumque sedebit infelix Theseus" (*Æneid*, vi. 617).

almost the demi-gods—of his people. We have then here in Jewish tradition at the time of our Lord three conditions (only two *places*) after death, two permanent —Gehenna and Paradise—and the other a temporary state of purgation. There were many theories current, but it seems beyond question, from a consideration of various authorities, that the Jews of our Lord's time were quite familiar with the idea of eternal happiness and eternal punishment, and of a punishment which for some would end in annihilation, and for others in a restoration, towards which they were helped by the prayers of those living on earth.[1]

And what is the value of this Jewish tradition? Why should we concern ourselves with it? The answer is that the theories and speculations that were prevalent among the Jews at the time of the ministry of our Lord are of the greatest use in determining the sense in which our Lord's teaching would be understood. Just in so far as our Lord and His Apostles accepted this tradition it is to be reckoned as representing the truth. For this reason we do well to study it, for without it we cannot arrive at the meaning of our Lord's words, and without it we shall also find it difficult to interpret the later beliefs that prevailed and to some extent are still held in the Christian Church.

[1] For a more full discussion of this subject, see Dr. PUSEY's *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment;* FARRAR's *Mercy and Judgment;* EDERSHEIM's *Life and Times of Jesus*, vol. ii., App. xix., pp. 788–93.

VIII.

Witness of the New Testament

(Hades-Gehenna)

MYSTERY OF MYSTERIES.

"Who sins, shall die ; who dies, shall suffer pain.
Dire trinity of anguish, death and guilt,
On whose inscrutable foundations built
The riddle of creation racks man's brain !
Probe as we will, with firm persistent strain
Plunging thought's rapier-blade from point to hilt
Till the last heart's drop of the world be spilt,
Deep at the roots of life these three remain.
Sin, Death and Suffering ! Mystery triune,
Whereof the name is legion ! Multiform
Symptom of irremovable disease !
Discord that jars upon the sphery tune
Sung in the ears of seraphs ! Sunless storm
Troubling the depth of God's refulgent ease !"

J. A. SYMONDS.

VIII.

Witness of the New Testament—Hades

IN the preceding chapter we have seen what was the popular conception among the Jews as to the future life, at the time of our Lord's ministry. The vague hopes and beliefs that are found here and there in the Old Testament had in the three centuries that intervened between the close of the Old Testament and the Incarnation taken a definite form, and were associated with certain well-understood terms. Our Lord did not come to destroy but to purify and amend the doctrine of the Jewish Church, and to reveal truths that had hitherto been altogether concealed. Consequently we find that a large portion of the system of the Jewish and Rabbinical schools was incorporated in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and although He occasionally denounced the corrupt glosses on the divine Law introduced by the Scribes and Pharisees, yet on the whole our Lord gave His approval to their teaching: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do . . ."[1]

[1] St. Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

Bearing this fact in mind, we not only may, but must, keep before us what was the belief as to the future life already in the mind of those whom our Lord addressed.

If the traditions of the Jews on this subject had been entirely or even largely mistaken, the first duty of an enlightened teacher would be to avoid adopting the terminology associated with this erroneous teaching, and in its place very plainly to set forth the truth as far as it could be expressed in human language.

When therefore we find that our Lord not only did not reject the traditional language of the Gentile and the Jew as to the future state, but on the contrary accepted and used it in many of the most solemn warnings He addressed to His disciples, we can only conclude that in the main the Gentile and the Jew had come very near to the truth.

And yet, when we speak of "the truth," we must not forget that it is quite possible, and indeed very probable, that all the language used in Holy Scripture as to the mysteries of the spiritual world is highly symbolical, and by no means to be subjected to a rigorously literal interpretation. The important point is this, that such language has been divinely approved of as most suited to convey to our minds ideas that are the "figures of the true."[1] We, who can form no mental picture of a spiritual world, must be content dimly to shadow forth the "invisible things" of God through the instrument-

[1] Heb. ix. 24. ἀντίτυπα τῶν ἀληθινῶν—*exemplaria*, Vulgate.

ality of "the things that are made."[1] Symbols are used by God to lift up our imagination and to bring before our thoughts certain ideas; they are, however, but "the copies of things in the heavens,"[2] and of things that are beneath in the realm of the shadow of death, not the very "things themselves."

It is beyond our power to imagine how the omnipresent Deity can be said to be localised, but in the language of Holy Writ—as well in the New Testament as in the Old—Heaven is spoken of as the place where the divine glory of the illimitable Deity is sensibly manifested.

This language cannot be explained away as wholly metaphorical. St. Stephen confessed that "the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands,"[3] but he added the words from Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne."[4]

Heaven is so often spoken of as "the throne of God," that while no doubt there is in such language an element of metaphor, there is also a sense in which the words are true. The Old Testament continually asserts or takes for granted that Heaven is the dwelling-place of God, and this truth was emphasised by the words of our Lord. He speaks again and again of "My Father which is in heaven," and when He taught His disciples to pray He bade them say, "Our Father which art in heaven."

[1] Rom. i. 20.
[2] Heb. ix. 23. *ὑποδείγματα.*
[3] Acts vii. 48.
[4] Isa. lxvi. 1.

We can only conclude therefore that there is a place which may be properly called the abode of Him Whom "the heaven of heavens cannot contain." From this Heaven our Lord said that he Had come, and He spoke of Heaven—as it is invariably spoken of in the Old Testament—as a region above us: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven"; and again, "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."[1] Therefore the Church has from the first asserted in her creed not only that the Eternal Son "came down from heaven," but also that "He ascended into heaven."

In speaking of Heaven, then, as the abode of God and of the holy angels, our Lord used well-understood language. What was new to the Jews was His claim to have come down from Heaven, and His continual reference to it as the future home which in some special way He was to open to all who believed in Him. It is not very clear how far the Jews thought of Heaven as the destiny of those who attained to the resurrection of the just, but even as our Lord taught His disciples to look upon God rather than Abraham as their Father, so He also taught them to think of Heaven as their home rather than Abraham's bosom. He asserted that those who attained to the resurrection of the dead "neither

[1] St. John iii. 13, vi. 38. See also 2 Cor. xii. 2; Rev. iv. 1, xxi. 2; and as an abode from which those who approach the earth *descend*, St. Luke x. 18; St. John i. 33; 1 Peter i. 12.

marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven";[1] and when the thought of His approaching departure made the disciples sad, our Lord consoled them with a promise that the separation should not be final: "Let not your heart be troubled. . . . In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you . . . I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."[2]

In this promise the words, "If it were not so I would have told you," are often overlooked; and yet they are surely important words. Our Lord had told His disciples that He must return to Heaven; and they, not knowing that there were many mansions in the Father's house, and that they would there be reunited with their beloved Master, were filled with grief at the thought of losing Him for ever. To console them our Lord replies that He would have told them plainly if such a separation had been involved in His departure, but so far from this being the case, He is going away to "prepare a place" for those whom He must for a while leave behind Him on earth.

When we turn from the language used in the New Testament about Heaven to consider what it says of the other regions of the unseen world, there is more difficulty, owing to the fact that in the English Bible

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 30. [2] St. John xiv. 1–4.

the one word "hell" stands for three different Greek words—Hades, Gehenna, and Tartarus.[1]

It is most necessary, however, to distinguish between the words Hades and Gehenna. Hades is the whole nether world, and is the exact equivalent to the word Sheol in the Old Testament. In the Gospel we find that our Lord accepted the belief already familiar to the Jews, owing to their association with Greek thought —that in Hades some souls are punished and some are comforted.

A careful study of the passages in which the Evangelists have recorded our Lord's words, seems to point to the conclusion that when the word Gehenna is used we are meant to understand a place of severe punishment from which there may be no release; while, on the contrary, in every instance where our Lord speaks of Hades, His teaching is consistent with the thought of a place or state of the dead in which there may

[1] "Αιδης, in the classics, is both the god of the nether world, and his kingdom; hence (in the latter sense) the kingdom of the dead both righteous and wicked.

Γεέννα, "the Greek form of the Hebrew word Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, once celebrated for the horrid worship of Moloch, and afterwards polluted with every species of filth, as well as carcases of animals and dead bodies of malefactors; to consume which, in order to avert the pestilence which such a mass of corruption would occasion, constant fires were kept burning; hence the word came to mean hell, the fires of Tartarus, the place of punishment in Hades."—See *Greek Lex. to New Test.*, by W. GREENFIELD.

Τάρταρος, "a dark abyss, as deep below Hades as earth below heaven. Later, Tartarus was either *the nether world* generally, or *a place of torment* and punishment, as opposed to the Elysian fields."—*Liddell and Scott's Greek Lex.*

be suffering, but the idea of finality is wanting. We can note this best by a few references to the sacred Text. When our Lord, in upbraiding the unfaithfulness of Capernaum, said, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell (Hades),"[1] we do not, of course, suppose that He meant either that Capernaum had been literally "exalted unto heaven," or would be "brought down to Hades." He employs a figure of speech to signify the utter overthrow of the city—its fall shall be as marked as the transition from the fulness of life to the nothingness of death. If our Lord had said that Capernaum should be brought down to Gehenna, the idea conveyed would have been not so much of overthrow as of exemplary punishment and terrible suffering.

Again, in speaking of the foundation of His Church, our Lord declared that "the gates of hell (*i.e.* Hades) shall not prevail against it."[2] It is not easy to say exactly what these words mean. They probably signify that all the powers of evil—of which death is a symbol—shall fail to destroy the life of the Church. Among these hostile forces are heresies, and all that belongs to spiritual decay and death, as well as the opposing force of those beings who belong to that portion of the spirit world which is arrayed against God. The city of God

[1] St. Matt. xi. 23.

[2] St. Matt. xvi. 18. See Job xxxviii. 17, Ps. ix. 13, Isa. xxxviii. 10. In the last reference we have *ἐν πύλαις ἅδου*, "the gates of hell," *i.e.* Hades, Sheol, but in the others the gates of death, *πύλαι θανάτου*.

is ceaselessly attacked by the city of darkness, but is never conquered, never entirely overthrown.

Now here, again, if our Lord had said that the "gates of Gehenna," instead of the "gates of Hades," should not prevail against the Church, the idea would have been limited to one department of the nether world, instead of including the whole power of death that is both personified[1] and localised by the word "Hades." We must remember that not only the power of death, as represented by the evil spirits and souls of the wicked, is spoken of in Holy Writ as opposed to God, but Death itself is "the last enemy" that shall be "destroyed."[2] Death is looked upon as the type of sin, and as such it stands out in Holy Scripture as the symbol of all that is contrary to the mind of God. "God," says the writer of the Book of "The Wisdom of Solomon," "created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of His own eternity. Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side do find it." Once more, it was in Hades that the rich man "lift up his eyes, being in torments." These words certainly witness

[1] See note p. 140. Hades kept the gates of his kingdom closed (and was therefore called by the Greeks πυλάρτης—"he that keeps the gates of hell"—lest any of the shades should escape or return to earth. (*Il.* viii. 367; *Paus.* v. 20.) "The gates" represented the whole armed population of the city who passed out through them to battle; they also symbolised the councils of war, etc., held at the gates of a city. Our Lord's promise included the assurance that neither secret plots nor open violence should prevail against His Church.

[2] 1 Cor. xv. 26.

to the fact that our Lord recognised that in Hades there was a state of punishment, but that Hades itself was not entirely such a penal abode is made clear by the fact that He Himself "descended into Hades," and yet He went not into the place of punishment therein, but into the part of Hades that He called Paradise.

Thus St. Peter, speaking on the Day of Pentecost, quoted the passage in the Psalms, "Thou shalt not leave My soul in Hades," and went on to explain that the psalmist, "seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell (Hades)." The fact that in the New Testament the very same word—Hades—is used for the place in which the rich man "lift up his eyes, being in torments," and for the place to which the spirit of our Lord descended at His death, is a proof that Hades is the whole nether world, and contained before the resurrection of our Lord not only a state of suffering, but also a state of rest. No one now supposes that the human soul of Jesus Christ passed from the cross to a state of torment. Such an idea would be not only entirely unwarranted by the words of the New Testament, but also in the highest degree offensive to Christian belief. The rich man and Lazarus were each alike in Hades, but the one was tormented in that part of Hades called Gehenna, and the other comforted in that part of Hades known as Abraham's Bosom, Gan Eden, and Paradise.

We have seen that the Jews thought of that part of

Hades called Gehenna as a state of punishment, and our Lord certainly sanctioned their belief and even added to the terrors symbolised by the word. He speaks of the wicked as going into "Gehenna," into "the fire that never shall be quenched," "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched," and no less than five times in a few verses He repeats the terrible threat of suffering in "the fire that never shall be quenched."[1] It is true that our Lord does not say that those who go into this fire shall for ever remain conscious in it. The fire certainly remains unquenched, but whether or no there may be deliverance from it is another question. There can be, however, no question at all that our Lord most emphatically dwelt upon the existence of a state of punishment, and that He spoke of it as "the Gehenna of fire."[2] If the souls that fall into Gehenna abide there everlastingly, then in Gehenna we have the "hell of the lost" such as almost all Christendom has believed in; if, on the contrary, the souls in Gehenna are only there for a time, then the Gehenna of the Gospels is nothing else than a Purgatory as terrible as any that the imagination has ever pictured. There remains, however, the possibility that some souls might be temporarily punished and perfected in Gehenna, while others may remain there for ever. We have already seen that the Gentiles were accustomed to think of Tartarus in this twofold aspect—as a place of apparently endless torment, and as a Purgatory—and the

[1] St. Mark ix. 43–46. [2] St. Matt. xviii. 9.

Jews had in a measure assimilated this doctrine. One proof of this acceptance of pagan terminology may be found in St. Peter's use of the word "*Tartarus*" which (like Hades and Gehenna) is translated "Hell" in our English Bible. He writes: "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to Tartarus,[1] and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." The Jewish idea of Gehenna was almost identical with that of Tartarus in ancient Greece. The question is whether or not our Lord, in accepting the general idea of Gehenna, accepted also the belief that for some souls, if not for all, the punishment there was but temporary. If no such belief had been known to the Jews, we could not suppose our Lord taught it, unless His language was so plain that there could be no mistake as to His meaning; but, knowing as we do that this belief formed a part of the Jewish and Gentile doctrine, we are surely justified in supposing that our Lord sanctioned it, if we find His language consistent with such an interpretation. Unquestionably no such teaching is prominent in our Lord's ministry, nor in any of the New Testament writings. But this is not sufficient proof that such belief is erroneous. Our Lord by no means passed over corrupt traditions of His people. His language on fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, severely censured popular abuses. His reference to other corruptions, such as the "corban," the buying and selling in the temple, and the "washing" of vessels,

[1] 2 St. Peter ii. 4, ταρταρώσας.

leaves us in no doubt whatever that our Lord condemned what He did not approve in the traditions of Israel. It is, then, remarkable that we have not a word of censure for the tradition that some sins are only temporarily punished in the world to come. But this is not all. To the Jewish people our Lord's words, on more than one occasion, must have been a strong confirmation of their belief. When He spoke of a prison whence none should go out until the uttermost farthing had been paid,[1] it is all but certain that He intended to imply the sum could never be forthcoming. On the contrary, when He spoke of all sins, except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, as pardonable either here or hereafter,[2] He certainly confirmed those who heard Him in their belief that some sins were forgiven after death. Again, He spoke of the servant who knew not his Lord's will, and how he should be beaten with but few stripes.[3] This teaching pointed out our Lord's acceptance rather than His rejection of the Jewish and Gentile belief that some souls might fall into Tartarus or Gehenna, and, after a "few stripes," pass upward. This probability becomes almost a certainty when we find the dead were prayed for by the Jews. It stands to reason that it would be useless to pray for those whose condition could in no way be improved.

Our Lord, in one of His most terrible descriptions of Gehenna, concludes His teaching with some words that are often passed over when the context is quoted.

[1] St. Matt. v. 26. [2] St. Matt. xii. 31, 32. [3] St. Luke xii. 48.

After repeating that in Gehenna the fire is not quenched, He added: "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another."[1] What do these words of our Lord mean? The late Bishop Wordsworth comments upon them: "If men will not be *seasoned* by the refining fire of God's Spirit, and of this world's trials, they will be *salted with the fire of Tophet,* 'the fire and brimstone,' the Dead Sea, or Salt Sea, of Gehenna, the Lake of Fire, *that* fire which has the property of salt, in that it does not consume but *preserve* its victims—even for evermore." It is true that salt in some portions of Holy Writ is associated with barrenness, but in the sacrifices it was called "the salt of the covenant of thy God,"[2] and was used to cleanse and to season, and usually in the Bible, salt, when used as a symbol, "is good." With reference to what Bishop Wordsworth says we may note that there is nothing in the context to suggest that "the refining fire of God's Spirit" is what our Lord is alluding to. The passage has no apparent connection with this life, but is entirely associated with the fire in Gehenna. May not St. Paul's statement that "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is," and that some shall be saved, "yet so as by fire,"[3] have some reference to our Lord's words? The assertion of

[1] St. Mark ix. 49, 50, *πᾶς γὰρ πυρὶ ἁλισθήσεται.*
[2] Lev. ii. 13.
[3] 1 Cor. iii. 13, 15.

our Lord, when He is speaking not of this life but of the next, that "every one"—not merely the hopelessly wicked—"shall be salted with fire," seems at least to allow of discussion as to whether He did not imply that some purification—perhaps penal—awaited all men. The fire that destroys the chaff purifies also and refines the gold. Whether our work be as chaff or gold will not be known completely here but hereafter, because as St. Paul says, "it shall be revealed by fire."[1]

Bearing in mind, then, that those who heard our Lord's teaching already believed that some souls were punished temporarily in Hades, we may claim some support for this belief from the Gospels. It is not plainly taught, but it is implied in several passages. Those who deny that there is any sanction in our Lord's teaching for belief in a temporary state of purification after death, are necessarily bound to understand all the terrible warnings uttered by our Lord as to suffering in Gehenna as references to the everlasting punishment of the wicked. Our Lord certainly taught with unfaltering voice that a state of very fearful suffering existed in the nether world, and if it were not a temporary state it must needs be an eternal one,

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 13. It is hardly necessary to repeat the warning that the language of Scripture as to the unseen world is probably entirely figurative. The "fire" and "the worm" of Gehenna are no more to be understood literally than the "gates of pearl" and "golden streets," etc. of Heaven. The one symbol represents what is painful, whether for cleansing or torment; the other, glory and beauty.

or one in which they who suffer are entirely destroyed and cease from conscious existence. There is no alternative. Volumes have been written on the meaning of single words employed by our Lord, such as 'æonian' (*αἰώνιος*), 'judgment,' 'punishment,' 'life,' etc. And what is the result? Merely to prove that these words do not in themselves settle the question whether or not the soul suffers everlastingly or is utterly destroyed. Dean Farrar, for example, in his *Eternal Hope*, merely shows that in popular Protestant belief the loss of a doctrine of a purgatory hereafter has led many Christians to teach the monstrous opinion that most men are "lost" for ever, whereas all that the Bible teaches is that some may be lost. The mere fact that almost all Christians have from the first thought that our Lord taught the possibility of some being for ever punished in Gehenna and excluded from Heaven, is a proof that such teaching lies at any rate on the surface of the New Testament. We may revolt against this belief and condemn it, but the fact remains that whereas there is little or nothing in the Old Testament — where it might have been looked for—to support it, it is from our Lord's own lips that the teaching of the existence of Gehenna has been learned by the Church, and it is in His words that we find the most terrible descriptions of the place where "the fire is not quenched," and where there is "weeping and gnashing of teeth." When all has been said that can be said, nothing can alter the fact

that the New Testament has taught men to believe in everlasting punishment, and that our Lord Himself speaks of the duration of the joy of Heaven as exactly parallel to the duration of the punishment of Gehenna. "These," He said, "shall go away into æonian punishment [εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον], but the righteous into life æonian [εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον]."[1] The punishment and the life are each æonian, and if the one means everlasting, it would seem difficult to deny that the other can mean anything less. Again, our Lord represents Himself as saying to the reprobate, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire [εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον] which is prepared for the devil and his angels."[2] The righteous, on the other hand, are spoken of as taking possession of "the kingdom" which was "prepared" for them "from the foundation of the world." The reprobates are condemned to æonian fire—not prepared for them, but for "the devil and his angels"; the righteous enter into the joy prepared for all men, but rejected by some. Those who have done most to modify popular exaggerations are yet unable to deny that Holy Writ seems to teach a future punishment of which no end is disclosed. Dr. Farrar writes: "I have never denied the doctrine of a retribution—even of a terrible retribution for sin—either in this world or in the life to come"; and again, "I have never denied—nay, in spite of deep and yearning hope, I have expressly admitted, the

[1] St. Matt. xxv. 34–46. [2] *Ibid.* 41, R.V.

possibility of even *endless* misery for those who abide in the determined impenitence of final and willing sin."[1] This is, of course, all that the Church has ever authoritatively taught, and we owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Farrar for his protest against the unwarrantable additions of theologians, and for his exposure of the injury done to reasonable belief by the Protestant denial of any state of purification hereafter. Whether the doctrine of eternal punishment is in itself reasonable, or whether it is consistent with the love of God, is not here our concern, but simply whether or no it was taught by our Lord. Now, while it is possible for the learned—weighing carefully the value of each of the Greek words used in the New Testament version of our Lord's teaching as to Gehenna — to argue that no single passage is sufficiently clear absolutely to establish the doctrine of everlasting punishment, it is also abundantly evident that the Church and all classes of men, learned and unlearned, with few exceptions—have from the first understood our Lord's words plainly to teach that doctrine. The possibility of some souls being everlastingly punished was quite familiar to those who listened to our Lord, and His words must have altogether confirmed and strengthened this belief. Whether the "punishment" involves the consciousness of the "lost," or whether it consists in the loss of the gift of "eternal life" and the Vision of God through total destruction, is a

[1] *Eternal Hope*, pp. 12, 13.

question to which it may be we cannot give any certain answer.

To sum up this chapter, our Lord unquestionably taught the existence of Gehenna—a state of suffering hereafter. As in His discourses He usually represents the wicked passing into this state *after* the final judgment, it would seem as if our Lord did not wish to represent this state of punishment as terminable. On the other hand, in the only instance where our Lord speaks of the soul in the intermediate state before the resurrection (*i.e.*, in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus), it is possible to interpret what He tells us in a way that would make the suffering in Hades educational—not merely penal.[1] On the whole, then, it is true to say that our Lord endorsed the doctrine already familiar to the Gentile and the Jew, that hereafter some souls are temporarily punished and perfected, while of the punishment of the hopelessly wicked He disclosed no end. We turn now from the consideration of our Lord's teaching as to the penal state in Hades to what is told us in the New Testament about the state of consolation called Abraham's Bosom and Paradise.

[1] See p. 54.

IX.

The Witness of the New Testament

(Paradise)

"O yet we trust that somewhere good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;
So runs my dream."—TENNYSON.

IX.

The Witness of the New Testament—Paradise

THE orthodox Jews were accustomed to speak of the abode in Hades where the souls of the righteous awaited the resurrection, as Abraham's Bosom, Gan Eden, and Paradise.

Our Lord, therefore, used well-understood words when in one of His parables He told how Lazarus after his death "was carried by the angels[1] into Abraham's bosom"; and also when from the cross He gave to the penitent robber the promise, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."[2]

Our Lord, however, added nothing to the knowledge of those He addressed as to the condition of the soul in the interval between the death and resurrection of the body.

We must, therefore, look a little more carefully into the sacred Scriptures if we would understand the teaching that gathers around the intermediate state of the righteous; for we shall find that it is closely associated with much that concerns the fall and redemption of man.

[1] St. Luke xvi. 22, *καὶ ἀπενεχθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀγγέλων.*

[2] St. Luke xxiii. 43.

In one sense "Paradise" and "Abraham's Bosom" are synonymous, but in another sense they are widely different. This difference is suggested by the fact that the word Paradise is twice used after Pentecost in the New Testament when the future state is spoken of, while there is no such reference to Abraham's Bosom.

The word Paradise, though it appears in the Old Testament in its Hebrew form (*Pardés*),[1] is, there can hardly be a doubt, a word of Aryan rather than of Shemetic origin. It was probably borrowed by the Jews from Persia. In its original signification, and in the Classics[2] the word simply means a beautiful park or pleasure-garden. After the conquests of Alexander the Great the word gained a recognised place in the language of the Hellenistic Jews, and was adopted by those who translated the Pentateuch into Greek as the equivalent of the "garden"[3] that the Lord God "planted eastward in Eden"; and they used it in the other portions of the Septuagint for any allusion to that fair home of primeval man. Paradise was thenceforth to the Jew the bright and happy region that had been lost by sin. By an easy succession of ideas the word then became associated with the future home of rest and tranquil enjoyment into which Abraham the Father of the faithful was thought to welcome his children at the hour of their death, or when they were purified and made ready for their reward.

[1] Song of Sol. iv. 13; Eccles. ii. 5; Neh. ii. 8. [2] *e.g.* Xenophon.
[3] Gen. ii. 8, "The Lord God planted a *paradise*.

As might be expected, the various Jewish sects had different theories respecting Paradise; some interpreted the word in a merely allegorical sense, and understood by it the attainment of spiritual perfection; others, such as the Rabbinic schools, mapped out Paradise much as Dante did in after ages, and had a complete topography of this part of the unseen world.[1]

Out of these theories grew the popular belief that the righteous Jews passed at death to a fair region of great beauty, almost exactly resembling the Elysian fields of the Greek mythology. Here they enjoyed the society of the heroes of their race, and notably that of their father Abraham. It was believed that the faithful in Paradise reclined as honoured guests on the bosom of the great Patriarch at that festive banquet which was the Jewish anticipation of "the marriage supper of the Lamb."[2] So far, then, the two titles Paradise and Abraham's Bosom are synonymous. It is only when we remember that in the primeval earthly Paradise man enjoyed the society and friendship of God, that we notice the great difference between the state of man in Eden and the conception of the future life conveyed under the figure of Abraham's Bosom. In the one we have as its characteristic the thought of the presence of God, while in the other God is apparently forgotten and the Patriarch takes His place!

[1] It must, however, be borne in mind that Dante by Paradise meant—as Christians usually mean—not a part of Hades, but *Heaven*.

[2] Rev. xix. 9.

To account for this we must go back to the earliest record that there is of man in the Bible.

It is clear that, at some period of time, man was brought into a special relationship with God, and that man by wilful distrust and disobedience forfeited to a great extent the privileges that had hitherto been his through friendship and union with the Creator. This separation was symbolised by the expulsion of man from Eden. We read that, "The Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden [Paradise] to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden [τοῦ παραδείσος] cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."[1]

However figurative this language may be, it is evidently intended to teach us that sin means a separation from God and the loss of the joy of His presence.

The promise, however, was given of a Redeemer Who, as "the Seed of the woman," should bruise the serpent's head.[2] It was only when this promise had been fulfilled, and the Incarnate Word had overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life, that the voice came from heaven with the promise that "to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the

[1] Gen. iii. 23, 24.

[2] Gen. iii. 15. For refutation of the Vulgate reading of "Ipsa" instead of "Ipse" see De Rossi's *Varr. Lectt. Vet. Test.* vol. iv., App., pp. 208, 209.

tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."[1]

It was a true instinct, then, that led the Jews to speak of the state of the righteous dead as in Abraham's Bosom rather than the Bosom of God; for until Jesus Christ, "the Seed of the woman," had opened the closed gates of the heavenly Paradise and Himself entered therein, the souls of the righteous dead were excluded from the Vision of God.

It may have been for this reason that our Lord did not speak of the nether world of the blessed as "Paradise" until He Himself was about to enter in among the dead, and thus give to them that which was essential to Paradise properly so called—the realisation of the Divine presence. The place in which Abraham, the Fathers, and the righteous dead were waiting, became truly Paradise the moment that the human soul of God Incarnate entered into it. Strictly speaking, it was not Paradise before our Lord by His entry glorified it, though it was spoken of by that name by those who had forgotten that, in losing Eden, man had lost the privilege of living in the consciousness of the presence of God.

Surely when the Lord God, walking in Paradise, "in the cool of the day," on the evening of that first Good Friday, had revealed Himself to the waiting dead as their long-expected Deliverer, it became impossible that they should ever again be comforted by any merely human presence, even though it were that of Abraham

[1] Rev. ii. 7.

"the friend of God"? A greater than Abraham had come to them, and henceforth in His presence alone could they find light and joy and peace. Like the beloved disciple, they would seek to rest on the breast of Jesus Christ, and no longer dream of Paradise as a repose on the bosom of Abraham.

Henceforth the earthly thoughts that men had for so long associated with their dream of bliss must be forgotten; in place of the Paradise of the Patriarch there has been opened to them a more blessed home, and they can now be satisfied with nothing less than the "Paradise of God." In the "cool of the day" of the redemption of the world, the Redeemer "went and preached unto the spirits in prison"[1] the glad tidings of their speedy deliverance from the "power of the grave"[2]—from the dominion of Hades. He told them of the near approach of the moment when He would "open the kingdoms of the heavens [*regna cælorum*] to all believers."

Long ages ago, beneath the trees of Eden, God had announced the curse under which man had fallen by his sin; now His presence makes another Paradise and in it He proclaims the plenteous redemption, which restores the right[3] to "the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

If this is the meaning of what we are told in the New Testament, it is clear that the Passion of Christ worked an immense change in the state of the righteous

[1] 1 St. Peter iii. 19. [2] Hosea xiii. 14. [3] Rev. xxii. 14.

in Hades, as well as in the condition of those who were living upon the earth.[1]

St. Matthew tells us that at the moment of our Lord's entry into Hades—that is to say, at the moment of His death—not only "the veil of the Temple was rent," but "the graves were opened."[2] This was probably significant of a change, not only in the state of the Church on earth, but also in the condition of the Church expectant. St. Matthew goes on to say that "many of them which slept arose, and came out of their graves."

Without attempting to be wise above what is written, or to pry into the deep things of God, we may perhaps, from a reverent consideration of what has been written in Holy Scripture for our learning, be able to gather some knowledge of what our Lord did, when "He descended into Hades," for the dead already gathered there, and what His death has accomplished for those who since His Ascension have died "in the Lord."[3]

It is strange that any Christian should doubt that the Passion effected an alteration in the intermediate state, or think that they who have fallen asleep in Jesus are still excluded from the presence of God as those

[1] Delitzsch writes: "There is a considerable difference between the condition of the souls of the departed prior and subsequent to the advent of Jesus Christ. . . . In respect of their souls, they are in the land of the living: they are at home with the Lord, after whom they longed . . . in Paradise . . . before God's throne . . . At least the degree of blessing of vision (*visio beatifica*) is even now a manifest one, and many are partakers of it, although certainly . . . the bliss even of the most favoured will experience a manifest enhancement" after the resurrection.—*Biblic. Psych.*, p. 497.

[2] St. Matt. xxvii. 51, 52.

[3] Rev. xiv. 13.

were who died before the kingdom of heaven was opened to all believers. Such a doubt is the more remarkable because the language of the Epistles is noticeably different to the language used in the Gospels about the life after death. Before the Ascension the place our Lord spoke of as Paradise is referred to as beneath the earth. St. Paul writes: "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?"[1] and St. Peter tells us that Jesus Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit; in which also He went and preached unto the spirits in prison."[2] Moreover, in the Apostles' Creed we say that "He descended into hell,"[3]—that is, into the nether world, Hades, the place of departed spirits.

We have to contrast these references to Paradise—before our Lord's Resurrection—as a place beneath, with the words of St. Paul, which speak of it as a place above: "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago . . . such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man . . . how that he was caught up into Paradise,"[4] etc. (ἁρπαγέντα . . . ἡρπάγη, "snatched up").

By Paradise, Cornelius A Lapide understands the

[1] Eph. iv. 9.

[2] 1 St. Peter iii. 18, 19. Some commentators deny that these passages refer to the descent into Hades (see PEARSON, *On the Creed*).

[3] *Descendit ad inferos.*

[4] 2 Cor. xii. 2–4 *Raptus est in Paradisum* (Vulgate). The soul of Lazarus was "carried" (*portaretur*) by angels,

highest Heaven; but without entering into the question as to whether St. Paul was "caught up" twice (once to the third Heaven, and then higher still, to Paradise), or whether there was but one "rapture" and consequently the "third Heaven" and "Paradise" are different names for the same place, we cannot doubt that Paradise is no longer a place to which one could be said to *descend*. It could no longer be "the lower parts of the earth," or "prison," or "Hades."

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, writing in the fourth century, says: "Elias was taken up only to Heaven; but Paul both into Heaven and into Paradise; (for it behoved the disciple of Jesus to receive more manifold grace,)" etc.[1]

The next reference to Paradise is in the Book of the Revelation of St. John, where the reward "to him that overcometh" is that he shall "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."[2] Does not this transference of the imagery of the earthly to the heavenly Paradise bear out the contention that where God reveals His presence, there is the true Paradise?

Archbishop Trench, in his *Epistles to the Seven Churches*, traces the gradual development of the meaning of the word Paradise. He says: "We may thus trace Παράδεισος passing through an ascending scale of meanings. From any garden of delight, which is its first meaning, it comes to be predominantly applied to the Garden of Eden, then to the resting-place of separate souls in

[1] *Catech. Lect.* xiv. 26. [2] Rev. ii. 7.

joy and felicity, and lastly to the very heaven itself; and we see eminently in it, what we see indeed in so many words, how revealed religion assumes them into its service, and makes them vehicles of far higher truth than any which they knew at first, transforming and transfiguring them, as in this case, from glory to glory."[1]

What, then, is the cause of this change of language, which speaks of Paradise, not as "in the lower parts of the earth," but as being where "He ascended up on high"? Cornelius A Lapide explains it in four words: *Ubi Christus ibi Paradisus. Ubi visio Dei, et beatitudo, ibi est cœlum*—"Where Christ is, there is Paradise. Where the vision of God is, and beatitude, there is Heaven." When Christ descended into the lower parts of the earth—*fecit ut limbus esset Paradisus*—He made Limbus to be Paradise.[2]

Our Lord by His presence made the place of waiting in Hades to be Paradise in a truer sense than it had been before. But our Lord's sojourn in Hades was only temporary—between His Death and Resurrection. When He arose from the dead did the souls that had welcomed the Lord God in Hades lose His presence? Surely not. The tradition of the Church, for which there is not wanting Scriptural proof, is that at His Resurrection our Lord led forth all the perfect spirits of the righteous who had been held captive by

[1] p. 102.

[2] Commentary *In Evangelia.* St. Luke xxiii. 43.

death. St. Matthew distinctly says that "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves *after His Resurrection*, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many."[1] Our Lord, then, we may believe, "led forth the ransomed saints to light";[2] He emptied the abode in which the souls of the righteous had hitherto awaited His coming, and gave them a share in His Resurrection. We know that during the great forty days between His Resurrection and Ascension our Lord lived for the most part a hidden life. Only at rare intervals did He visibly go into the holy city or appear to His disciples. May it not be that this hidden life was lived with those whom He had freed from death, and that they enjoyed His presence in the spiritual world which is veiled from the eyes of those who are still in the natural body? Before His Resurrection it needed an exercise of our Lord's Divine power to hide Himself from the sight of men—after His Resurrection it required an exercise of His power in order to reveal Himself to His disciples. He had entered into the spiritual kingdom which flesh and blood cannot inherit, and into which consequently the

[1] Ch. xxvii. 52, 53.

[2] From the hymn, "*Aurora cælum purpurat*," sung at Lauds on Low Sunday in the Latin offices. See translation in *Hymns A. and M.*, 126—

> "While He, the King, the Mighty King,
> Despoiling death of all its sting,
> And, trampling down the powers of night,
> Brings forth His ransomed saints to light."

disciples could not enter while they were still in the flesh. St. Paul says, speaking of the natural body, that "whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord"[1]—but they who are "absent from the body," or clothed with the spiritual body of the resurrection, are "present with the Lord." It may well, then, have been the case that, while the Apostles were only miraculously made aware now and then of the presence of Christ, those whom He had brought with Him from the dead were ever "present with the Lord," as partakers in His Resurrection. If this were so, then we have an explanation of the words of the Apostle who, speaking of the Ascension of our Lord, says that "when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive," or as it might be translated, and is in the margin of our Bibles (A.V.), "He led a multitude of captives."[2] He ascended not alone, but, as a great conqueror, He led in His train multitudes whom He had taken out of the captivity of death, and to whom He gave liberty and life eternal, and the joy of His presence for evermore. The great commentator Cornelius A Lapide writes: "Christ delivered the

[1] 2 Cor. v. 6-8.

[2] Eph. iv. 8. This is frequently referred to in the ancient offices of the Church. In the Latin hymn for Vespers and Lauds, on Ascension Day *Salutis humanæ Sator* (*Brev. Rom.*)—

> "Thou, bursting Hades open wide,
> Didst all the captive souls unchain;
> And thence to Thy dread Father's side
> With glorious pomp ascend again."

patriarchs, prophets and other holy ones from the dominion[1] of Hades, and having made them captives by His holy and happy captivity, He, triumphing, led them up to Heaven."[2] The teaching of the early reformers of the Church of England on this subject is found in the interpretation of the fifth Article of the Creed, in *The Institution of a Christian Man*: "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, at His entry into hell, first conquered and oppressed both the devil and hell, and also death itself . . . afterwards He spoiled hell *and delivered and brought with Him from thence all the* souls of the righteous and good men which from the fall of Adam died in the favour of God, and in the faith and belief of this our Saviour, which was then to come." If Paradise is the place where the Incarnate God is

[1] St. Paul writes that "death reigned" until our Lord destroyed his power (Rom. v. 14).

[2] Thus in the hymn, *Ad regias agni dapes* (*A. and M.*, 127)—

"Mighty Victim from the sky
Hell's fierce powers beneath Thee lie;
Thou hast conquered in the fight,
Thou hast brought us life and light.

"Now no more can death appal,
Now no more the grave enthral;
Thou hast opened Paradise,
And in Thee Thy saints shall rise."

Much of the force of this and other hymns is lost in the translation, as a comparison of the above with the Latin will make plain—

"Victor subactis inferis,
Trophæa Christus explicat,
Cœloque aperto, subditum,
Regem tenebrarum trahit."

manifest, then it must be now in one or more of the many mansions above—not beneath in Hades.

The Passion has merited that all should escape the dominion of death, as soon as whatever is akin to death be done away in the soul. Since the Ascension, then, they who die in the Lord find that their reward is to be "with Christ." This is apparently the teaching of St. Paul, who speaks of his confident expectation that when he departs this life he shall be "with Christ," and though absent from the body "be present with the Lord." It is an article of the faith that Christ has "ascended into Heaven," and therefore it is clear that if St. Paul expected to be with Christ, he expected to be in Heaven even before the resurrection.

To quote the words of St. Gregory the Great: "Who doubteth not that Christ is in Heaven, doubteth not also that the soul of Paul is in Heaven."

Hence, in the later language of the Church, Paradise is a synonym for Heaven, though it is the custom of some to associate the word Heaven with the state of glory, reserved for the perfect man after the resurrection of the flesh, and to use the word Paradise when speaking of the abode of "the spirits of just men made perfect"[1] who are already "with Christ," but are not yet clothed with the glory of a spiritual body. As long as we allow that the perfected spirits are, since the Ascension, no longer excluded from the Vision of God, it is not a matter of any great moment whether

[1] Heb. xii. 23.

we associate their blissful life with the name of Paradise or Heaven. "Where Christ is, there is Paradise"; the redeemed who have departed hence and have been cleansed from all stain are "with Christ," and Christ is in Heaven. That is enough. His presence fills all in the "many mansions" with joy and peace; and whether the lower of these mansions be more correctly called Paradise, and the higher—reserved for the just after the resurrection—called Heaven, is not a matter of any vital importance. It is important, however, to bear in mind that, owing to the meritorious Cross and Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the spirits of just men made perfect are no longer excluded from the Vision of God until the far-off day of the resurrection, but through His Precious Blood and for His merits' sake they are even now "with Christ" where He is.[1] This St. Paul taught when he wrote: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."[2] This is not the language of the Jew, but of the Christian. It is sometimes objected that the belief that the soul enjoys the Vision of God before the general judgment renders that judgment useless. If those who thus argue believe that no soul

[1] Delitzsch agrees with the Catholic commentators in this. He writes: "Then ascending out of Hades . . . He led the men who in Hades honoured Him . . . toward Heaven, for Paradise is from that time forth above the earth, and the souls of the blessed dead are . . . henceforth in Heaven."—*Biblic. Psych.*, p. 485.

[2] 2 Cor. v. 1.

can know its fate until the general judgment, the objection is intelligible; but in that case the soul must either be in a state of suspense until the resurrection, or else wrapped in unconsciousness. If the soul is rewarded or punished — as Holy Scripture teaches—before the resurrection, some form of judgment must have already been passed upon the soul. The degree of reward cannot affect the utility of the judgment. If the soul may reasonably be supposed to be in "joy and felicity" before the resurrection and yet without incongruity be "judged" at the last day, it is difficult to see why the fact that this joy and felicity are said to be found in the Vision of God should render the judgment superfluous. The explanation that seems most in conformity with Holy Scripture is that given by the general consent of the Church, namely, that at the moment of death each particular soul is judged, and its final destiny is made known to it. At the last day this judgment is made known publicly, and God is justified in His works. In these two judgments—the particular and the general, as they are called—man is dealt with in his twofold capacity—as an individual, and as a member of the whole human race.

Again, although the soul is the *Ego*, or responsible part of man, and is thus fitly rewarded or punished, yet the body is essential to constitute man in his completeness. The soul apart from the body is not "man."[1]

[1] It seems evident from Holy Scripture that the soul retains a bodily form after death, as in all cases in Holy Scripture the dead are recognis-

Hence the final judgment follows the resurrection, so that the body may share in the glory or disgrace that has already been the lot of the soul in its disembodied state. The resurrection of the body, it may be supposed, increases the joy or misery of the soul. Here on earth the body is essential, but hereafter the soul can and does exist apart from the body between death and the resurrection, and yet, as the soul is designed to inhabit a body, the body is needful for the completeness—the *bene esse*—though not for the existence—the *esse*—of the future life. The beatitude of the soul in the resurrection is increased, not in intensity but in extension; that is to say, the Vision of God remains the same, but is enjoyed with a greater number of faculties. It is, therefore, quite untrue to say that the general judgment and the resurrection are rendered useless by the belief that the perfected spirits are—since the Ascension—admitted to the Vision of God, and are "with Christ" in Heaven. It is also untrue to say that this doctrine involves the belief that the soul receives its full reward before the resurrection.

We have witnesses in all ages of the Church in support of the interpretation that has been given here of the passages of Holy Writ that speak of the work of our Lord in Hades: of His liberation of the souls of

able by those who see them—*e.g.* Samuel, Moses and Elias, Dives and Lazarus. St. Irenæus says: "Souls . . . keep the very same bodily form in which they are moulded . . . they have the figure of a man, so as to be both known and to remember the things which are here" on earth. (Book ii., xxxiv. 1.)

the righteous in His triumph over death; of their exaltation with Him to Heaven at His Ascension; and of the entrance there of the souls of the faithful when they have been perfected.[1]

St. Clement of Alexandria writes that "The Lord descended to Hades for no other purpose but to preach the Gospel. . . . Further, the Gospel says that many bodies of them that slept arose—plainly as having been translated to a better state. There took place, then, a universal movement and translation through the economy of the Saviour."[2] Tertullian teaches that "Christ descended to the lower parts of the earth, that there He might make the patriarchs and prophets participants of Himself, and presently caused them to pass to Paradise by sharing in His Resurrection." St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that "He descended to the regions beneath the earth, that from thence also He might redeem the just. For wouldest thou, I pray, that the living should enjoy His grace, and that, being most of them unholy; and that those who from Adam had been imprisoned long while, should not now obtain deliverance? Wouldest thou not that He should descend and rescue such as these?"

[1] The assertion of some writers that Paradise is not the highest heaven seems to be refuted by the fact that Paradise is "where Christ is," and He is in the highest heaven—"above all the heavens." See Eph. iv. 10.

[2] End of second century. *Stromata*, vi. 6.

X.

The Teaching of the Primitive Church

"If I might leave one bequest to the rising generation of clergy, who will have (what I have had only incidentally) the office of preachers, it would be, 'In addition to the study of Holy Scripture, which they too studied night and day, study the Fathers, especially St. Augustine.'"—Dr. PUSEY.

X.

The Teaching of the Primitive Church

IN the period immediately following the apostolic age the Church did not formulate any dogmas as to the condition of the soul between the death and resurrection of the body.

There seems no reason to doubt that some of the converts from Judaism continued to think of the righteous dead as awaiting the second coming of our Lord in a place similar to that which they had been accustomed to speak of as Abraham's Bosom.

We must, however, bear in mind that the apostolic epistles had been very generally understood to teach that the return of Jesus Christ would take place very speedily. At first it was thought that the Lord would return during the lifetime of some of those whom St. Paul addressed. This may be gathered from much that the Apostle wrote in his Epistle to the Thessalonians[1] —the first of the New Testament writings. Our Lord had used language that had been understood by the Apostles to mean that He would come again in their

[1] 1 Thess. i. 10; iv. 15, 17; v. 2, 23.

lifetime to take them to Himself. Had He not said, "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom"?[1] It was, therefore, with some such thought in his mind that St. Paul wrote to reassure those who supposed that the dead who had already "fallen asleep" before the Second Advent would suffer loss. "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: *then we which are alive and remain* shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."[2]

It seems that the Christian Thessalonians, or some among them, made the anticipation of this speedy return of their Lord an excuse for neglecting their daily duties and living in idleness. St. Paul, upon hearing this, wrote a second epistle to the Thessalonians, explaining that the "day of Christ"[3] might yet be delayed for a long time; and in any case the steady

[1] St. Matt. xvi. 28. [2] 1 Thess. iv. 13–17. [3] 2 Thess. ii. 2.

performance of the daily duties of life was the best preparation for the Second Advent.

But it is beyond question that the thoughts of the Apostles and their immediate successors were fixed upon the great "day of the Lord," rather than upon the state of the soul awaiting that day. The Gentiles were already familiar with the doctrine that the soul survived the death of the body, although there was doubtless among all classes a widespread unbelief in any future life. What the Gentile world was not familiar with was the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. It was therefore upon the resurrection, and what followed it, that the Apostles and great Fathers of the post-apostolic Church insisted. The Christian faith concerned the sanctification of the body as well as the soul, and the corruption of morals prevalent in the heathen world made the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh a very practical point of dogma.

It is not meant, however, that there was no essential agreement among the sub-apostolic Fathers as to the soul in its intermediate state. The epistles of St. Paul had taught men to think of those who by reason of death were "absent from the body" as being, even before the resurrection, "present with the Lord." Alford in his learned Commentary says, with reference to this statement by St. Paul, that this is "all that is revealed to us of the disembodied state of the righteous." The point, then, to keep in mind is that Christ ascended

into Heaven, and "is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Christ as the Incarnate Son is not omnipresent. He is present in His humanity, corporally, locally, and visibly, only in Heaven. By His divinity —as God the Son—He is of course—and always has been from the beginning—present everywhere; His Godhead fills all things, both in Heaven and earth. The Sacred Humanity, on the contrary, can only be in one place at a time, and is, therefore, locally in Heaven and not elsewhere. It would seem, then, that so far there is no room for difference of opinion as to the intermediate state of the souls of the righteous, but there are in some of the writings of the early Fathers passages that seem to contradict this doctrine, and to teach that the soul cannot enter Heaven until after the resurrection of the body. St. Justin Martyr strongly denounces certain heretical Christians who in his day taught that "there is no resurrection of the dead, but as soon as men die their souls are taken up into Heaven."[1] In another passage he denies that the soul is, strictly speaking, immortal; and yet, "at the same time," he continues, "I affirm that souls never perish, for this would be indeed a godsend to the wicked. What, then, befalls them? The souls of the good are consigned to a better place, and those of the evil and unjust to a worse, there to await the day of judgment. Thus such as are worthy to see God die no more, but others shall undergo punishment as

[1] *Dial. Tryph.* 80.

long as it shall please Him that they shall exist and be punished."[1] Now although these passages seem at first sight to tell against the belief that the righteous are with Christ in Heaven before the judgment, yet they do not in reality necessarily do so. St. Justin Martyr does not so much concern himself with what name should be given to the "better place" in which the souls of the righteous await the resurrection as with the heresy which denied that any resurrection of the body was to be looked for. In any subsequent age of the Church such an error would have been condemned in equally emphatic—though differently worded—language.

St. Irenæus, however, certainly taught something very like the old Jewish belief about the souls of the just being excluded from Heaven until the resurrection; but he seems to be the only Father whose language on this point admits of no other interpretation. It must also be borne in mind that St. Irenæus does not suppose that the souls of the righteous are in Paradise, for he agrees with the later Church in speaking of Paradise as a part of Heaven. He writes: "The Lord having departed in the midst of the shadow of death, where the souls of the dead were, afterwards in course He rose again in the body, and after His resurrection was taken up: evidently the souls of the disciples also,

[1] *Ibid.* 5. St. Justin (with Tatian) taught that "the soul is not of its own nature immortal," *i.e.* its immortality is a gift from Him Who alone hath life in Himself, or as St. Paul says, "hath immortality."

for whose sake indeed the Lord wrought these things, go away into the invisible place which is appointed for them by God, and there come and go, awaiting the resurrection, afterwards receiving back their bodies, and rising again entirely, *i.e.* bodily, as the Lord Himself arose; so will they come unto the Vision of God. For none that is a disciple is "above his master, but every one that is perfect shall be as his master."[1] As therefore our Master did not straightway soar away and depart, but awaiting the time of His resurrection appointed by the Father (which also was shown by Jonas), and after three days arising, was taken up; so must we also wait the time of our resurrection appointed by God, foretold by the prophets, and after that arise and be taken up, as many as our Lord shall account worthy thereof."[2]

Such was the teaching of St. Irenæus. It is not easy to see how this doctrine can be reconciled with the words of St. Paul, except on the supposition that the Apostle, when he said that the disembodied souls of the righteous were "with Christ," meant no more than that they were with Him in the same sense that they were with Him on earth. Our Lord certainly promised that where two or three are gathered together in His name there He would be in their midst,[3] but St. Paul surely intended something more than was promised

[1] St. Luke vi. 40.
[2] *Against Heresy*, Book v. 31.
[3] St. Matt. xviii. 20.

to the faithful here on earth, or he would not have said that to "*depart* and be with Christ" was "far better" than to remain in the Church on earth.

However this may be, St. Irenæus lends no support to those who speak of the departed as excluded from the Vision of God until the resurrection, and yet teach that they are already in a place called Paradise. St. Irenæus is quite clear in teaching that Paradise is a part of Heaven and that those in Paradise enjoy the Vision of Jesus Christ. According to St. Irenæus, therefore, the soul cannot enter Paradise until after the resurrection. He writes: "Now when this fashion (*i.e.* this world) is passed away, and man is made young again, and hath become ripe for incorruption, so as never more to be susceptible of decay from age, there shall be the new heaven and the new earth: in them, being new, shall man abide always new, and in communion with God. . . . And as the elders say, then also both those who are deemed meet for the heavenly abode shall depart thither, and others shall enjoy the deliciousness of Paradise, and others possess the brightness of the city; for in every place shall the Saviour be seen, according as they who see Him shall be worthy.

"And this is the distinction of the abode of those who bear fruit, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty: whereof the one sort shall be taken up into the heavens, the next shall abide in Paradise, others again shall inherit the city: and that on this

account the Lord said, "'In My Father's house are many mansions.'"[1]

Tertullian agrees in the main with the teaching of Justin Martyr and St. Irenæus on the intermediate state of the soul, but we must bear in mind that on this subject these early Fathers do not speak dogmatically; the Church had not spoken, and each Father was more or less free to follow his own interpretation of Scripture, aided no doubt by the Spirit of God. Thus Tertullian, while he excludes all those who die in the Lord from Paradise until after the resurrection, makes an exception in the case of martyrs, who, he says, go at once to Paradise instead of to Hades, and are with Christ.[2] We find, then, from the very first that some at least of the faithful departed were thought of as admitted to the immediate presence of their Lord, and that they were spoken of as being in Paradise —a state distinct from that in which the rest of the dead in Christ awaited their reward.

[1] *Against Heresy*, Book v. 36. St. Irenæus adds: "This is the couch with three compartments, on which shall recline all who feast having been invited to the marriage."

[2] "Nemo enim peregrinatus a corpore statim immoratur penes Dominum, nisi ex martyrii prærogativa paradiso scilicet, non inferis, deversurus."—*De Resurr. Carnis*, *c.* 43. See also S. Cyprian, *De Exhort. Martyr.* Again we note the distinction between Paradise as part of Heaven, and the nether world in the following passage: "We learn from the Scriptures that the souls of sinners are in Hades. . . . But the souls of the just, after the coming of Christ (as we learn from the robber on the cross) are in Paradise. For Christ our God did not open Paradise for the soul of the holy robber alone, but for the souls of all the holy thereafter."—*Quæstt. ad Antioch.* p. 19, in *St. Athanasius Opp.* ii. 272.

In passing from the second to the third century we find St. Cyprian encouraging his people not to fear death. He writes: "Let us embrace the day which commits each of us to his own resting-place; which, after rescuing us hence . . . places us back in Paradise, and in the heavenly kingdom. . . . Paradise we are to reckon our native land (*patriam*);[1] patriarchs are now our parents: wherefore not haste and run, to behold our country, to salute our parents? . . . O sweet, heavenly realms, where death can never terrify, and life never end! Ah, perfect and perpetual bliss! There is the glorious company of the apostles: there is the assembly of prophets exulting: there is the innumerable company of martyrs, crowned after their victory and passion. . . . To these, dearest brethren, let us with eager longings hasten: let it be the portion which we desire, speedily to be among them, speedily to be gone to Christ."[2]

The great Fathers of the fourth century are still clearer, yet even in their writings we must not expect to find, any more than in those of the earlier writers, any absolute agreement in either their teaching or terminology about the future state. They so persistently dwell upon the glory of the risen life that it is not at all easy to find out exactly what they believed was the

[1] In the collect of the *Missale Romanum* said at a Requiem, *in die obitus*, this expression is used; it is prayed that the angels may conduct the departed "to the native land of paradise" (*ad patriam paradisi*).

[2] *De Mort.* 20, written A.D. 252.

condition of the soul before the resurrection. Indeed, not only do they show that in minor points there were different beliefs in the Church, but we not infrequently find a Father in one passage of his works apparently contradicting what he seems to teach in another. It is only possible to refer to one or two out of the many Fathers who might be quoted.

St. John Chrysostom writes: "Let us then not simply grieve for the dead, nor joy for the living simply. But how? Let us grieve for sinners, not only for the dead, but also for the living. Let us joy for the just, not only the living, but also the dead. For those though living are dead, while these although dead, yet live; those even while they are here are to be pitied of all, because they are at enmity with God; the others, even when they have departed thither, are blessed, because they are gone to Christ. Sinners, wherever they are, are far from the King, and therefore are subjects for tears; while the just, be they here, or be they there, are with the King; there indeed in a higher and nearer degree, not through a figure, or by faith, but, as the Apostle says, 'face to face.'"[1]

Here St. John Chrysostom plainly asserts his belief that the righteous are after this life not excluded from the Vision of their Lord, but are before the resurrection "with Christ."

In his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans St. John Chrysostom says, "Paul was a man, partaking

[1] Hom. iii., on Phil. i. 24.

of the same nature with us. . . . But because he shewed such great love towards Christ, he went up above the heavens, and stood with the angels. And so if we too would rouse ourselves up some little, and kindle in ourselves that fire, we shall be able to emulate that holy man. . . . Let us, then, not admire him only, but imitate him, that we too may, when we depart hence, be counted worthy to see him, and to share the glory unutterable, which God grant we may all attain to by the grace . . . of our Lord Jesus Christ . . ."[1]

In contrast to those Fathers who speak of Paradise as an inferior part of Heaven, St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his Lectures teaches that Paradise is one of the higher of the many mansions. "If," he says, "Elias attained as far as the first heaven, but Paul as far as the third, the latter has doubtless obtained a more honourable dignity. Be not ashamed of thine Apostles; they are not inferior to Moses, or behind the prophets; but they are noble with the noble, yea, than the noble yet more noble. For Elias truly was taken up into heaven; but Peter has the keys of the kingdom of heaven. . . . Elias was taken up only to heaven; but Paul both into heaven and into Paradise (for it behoved the disciple of Jesus to receive more manifold grace): . . . Paul descended from above, not because he was unworthy to abide in the third heaven, but in order . . . that he might receive the crown of martyrdom."[2]

In different passages of the voluminous writings of

[1] Hom. xxxii. conclusion. [2] *Catech. Lect.* xiv. 26.

St. Augustine we find it difficult to reconcile his teaching as to the intermediate state. At one time he writes that "the interval between the death of man and the last resurrection, holds the soul in hidden receptacles, as each is worthy of rest or of misery, according to that which it hath gotten in the body when alive";[1] at another time he speaks of the souls of the just as "able in that heaven ineffably to see . . . the very substance of God, and God the Word, by Whom all things were made, in the Love of the Holy Spirit."[2] St. Augustine thinks that it is likely that Abraham's Bosom, Paradise, and the third Heaven, are different names for one and the same place, and that the souls of the faithful may be spoken of as awaiting the resurrection in a state to which either of these names is suitable. St. Augustine is not consistent in his teaching as to whether the Beatific Vision is granted before the resurrection; at one time he is doubtful, while at another he is quite clear that those in Paradise enjoy the Vision of God. Other Fathers speak of the soul before the resurrection as being "with Christ," and in Him seeing God. Thus St. Hilary distinguishes between the "kingdom of the Lord," in which the saints are with Christ until the resurrection, and "the kingdom of God," "the eternal kingdom," "the heavenly kingdom," and "the eternal and blessed kingdom," into which they are admitted after the resurrection, advancing to the kingdom of the Father by the kingdom of the

[1] *Enchir.* chap. cix.; *De Civ. Dei.* xii. 9. St. Thomas Aquinas interprets these "receptacles" as heavenly places. [2] *De Gen. ad Litt.* xii. 34, § 67.

Son, and so being admitted to the Vision of God—to the contemplation of the divine glory.

Dr. Pusey writes, at the close of his examination of the teaching of the Fathers on Paradise, "In the main, then, all this harmonises together: that they are at rest; with the Lord; in His keeping; seeing Him (though we know not the place which Scripture designates as 'Paradise,' or 'Abraham's Bosom,' or 'the Altar'), yet not seeing God as they shall see Him after the resurrection, nor having as yet their full reward."

The following words of St. Augustine perhaps represent the sum of what was believed as to the intermediate state of the perfectly righteous, between their death and the resurrection: "Where are those saints, think we? There where it is well. What seekest thou more? Thou knowest not the place, but think of their desert. Wherever they are, they are with God—'The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God.'"[1]

Here it may be well to ask if there is anything in the early Fathers to lead us to suppose that they believed the living on earth had communion with the souls of the departed saints. The Article in the Apostles' Creed "I believe in the Communion of Saints" is first found in a sermon preached in 490—the close of the fifth century. Why was this Article introduced into the Creed at this late date? We cannot be quite positive, but there is every reason to suppose that it was added to ensure the acceptance of

[1] Serm. 298 in *Nat. Apost. Pet. et Paul.* iv.

some truth hitherto commonly believed, but lately the subject of attack. It is certain that the heretical Vigilantius condemned many acts of devotion towards the saints that were in his day universally practised throughout the Church. What these practices were we know from the fiery defence of them by St. Jerome in his well-known treatise *Against Vigilantius*. Vigilantius had denounced many customs prevalent in the Church, but all these are not our concern. We need only notice those that throw light on the attitude of the Church towards the saints—that is, towards those who, on account of martyrdom or eminent holiness, were thought of as certainly in Paradise. For all the righteous dead there was a good hope that they were with the saints, but this hope did not warrant the Church in paying to them those outward marks of respect which she freely rendered to her martyrs and confessors.

St. Jerome therefore vigorously defends the veneration shown to the relics of the saints, and such outward observances as visiting their shrines and burning tapers at their tombs. He indignantly asks, "Do we, every time that we enter the basilicas of the apostles and the prophets, as well as of the martyrs, pay homage to the shrines of idols? Are the tapers which burn at their tombs only the tokens of idolatry? Madman, who in the world ever adored the martyrs? Who ever thought that man was God?" Vigilantius not only condemned these usages, but also denied that the saints

in Heaven pray for those on earth. This being his belief, he naturally would have held that it was useless to ask the saints for their prayers. It by no means necessarily follows that because the saints in Paradise pray for the Church on earth, therefore it is the duty of individual members of the Church militant to invoke the prayers of the saints; but what we seek to know is, whether any such custom was known and approved in the primitive Church. Now, as we shall see, there is no doubt at all that in the fourth century the custom of invoking the saints was universal, and there can be little doubt that the addition to the Apostles' Creed of the Article "I believe in the Communion of Saints" was intended to cover this practice, as well as to emphasise the fellowship that those in the Church on earth have one with another, and with their brethren who have gone before into the unseen world.[1]

As the custom of invoking the saints was confessedly universal in and after the fourth century, it is not necessary to quote more than one or two references to the practice[2] from the writings of the Fathers.

[1] Bishop PEARSON, in his book *On the Creed*, Art. ix., says: "The Saints of God, living in the Church of Christ, are in communion with all Saints departed out of this life and *admitted to the presence of God*." He adds in a note, "This is that part of the Communion of Saints which those of the ancients especially insisted on who first took notice of it in the Creed."

The Lutheran Professor, Dr. HARNACK, quotes the earliest commentary on this Article of the Creed by Faustus of Riez (A.D. 490), who said this Article was aimed against those who denied the *cultus* of the saints.

[2] It should be noted that the *invocation* of saints is not a *doctrine*, but a practice.

St. John Chrysostom, in his homilies on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, says: "The tombs of the servants of the Crucified are more splendid than the palaces of kings; not for the size and beauty of the buildings (yet even in this they surpass them), but, what is more, in the zeal of those who frequent them. For he that wears the purple [the Emperor] goes to embrace those tombs, and, laying aside his pride, stands begging the saints to be his advocates with God; and he that wears the diadem implores the tentmaker and the fisherman, though dead, to be his patrons. Wilt thou dare then tell me to call the Lord of these, dead, Whose servants, even after their decease, are the patrons of the kings of the world?"

Again, after advising the people to be zealous for their own salvation, and not to trust to the help of others, he adds: "And this I say, not that we may omit supplicating the saints, but to hinder our being careless, and entrusting our concerns to others only, while we fall back and slumber ourselves."

St. Augustine, the great Doctor of the Church, has written much that bears on the subject in his treatise *De cura pro mortuis.* In answer to the question whether the dead were benefited by their bodies being buried at, or near, the tombs of the martyrs, St. Augustine replies: "I do not see what help this can be to the dead except in this way: that upon recollection of the place in which are deposited the bodies of those whom they love, they should by prayer commend

them to those same saints, who have as patrons taken them into their charge to aid them before the Lord. . . . When then the mind recollects where the body of a very dear friend lies buried, and thereupon there occurs the thought of a place rendered venerable by the name of a martyr, to that same martyr doth it commend the soul in affection of heartfelt recollection and prayer."

It cannot be supposed that a custom so widespread and so completely taken for granted was a novelty in the fourth century, but it is remarkable that in the preceding centuries there is no proof obtainable of the invocation of the departed saints. There are, of course, many passages in the earlier Fathers showing that they believed the saints offered prayers for those on earth, and there are examples of men asking those near death to pray for them when they were in the presence of God, and of others praying to God to bestow some favour for the sake of His saints and at their prayer. These passages are, however, beside the mark, and cannot be quoted as supporting the invocation of departed saints. No instance can be found in Holy Scripture of such invocation, and no reference to the guardianship of the angels seems sufficiently to touch upon the question to be adduced in support of direct invocation, not of angels, but of saints. The fact that the invocation of saints was customary in the Church from the fourth century to the sixteenth, and that to this day the practice prevails throughout the whole Church with the solitary exception of the

Anglican communion is a very strong argument in support of the practice, but lacking all clear evidence in Holy Scripture, and in the Church during the first three centuries, it can hardly be considered as an essential part of Christian piety. Moreover there can be no question that in the mediæval Church the invocation of the saints led to great abuses; and it is to be feared that these abuses are still prevalent in the modern Church of Rome. It is quite commonly taught by the school of which the late Father Faber was an apostle,[1] that devotion to Mary is an essential of Christian life. Dr. Newman indeed disclaimed the invocation of our Lady as necessary to salvation; for, as a student of the Fathers, he knew that there was no sign of such a belief to be found in the early Church or in the great Fathers that have been already quoted as teaching the invocation of saints. Dr. Newman says, speaking of the invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary as being thought necessary to salvation, "If it were so, there would be grave reason for doubting of the salvation of St. Chrysostom or St. Augustine, or of the primitive martyrs. Nay, I should like to know if St. Augustine, in all his voluminous writings, invokes her once."

[1] There are schools of thought in the Church of Rome as well as in the Church of England. In each communion the schools differ on questions doctrinal and practical on which there is thought to be no dogmatic or moral teaching binding upon the Church. In the Church of England these points are more numerous, because many doctrinal matters are left open which are decided in the Roman Catholic Church.

There can be little doubt that among the more ignorant the tendency has been, and is, to look upon the saints as more likely than our Lord to help those in need; and this perversion of the truth must be in some degree destructive of the faith of the Gospel, which is the revelation of God as infinite Love.

If the invocation of saints had meant no more than desiring their prayers—the saying to a saint, *Ora pro nobis* — there would have been no such danger, but anyone who has the least acquaintance with the devotional literature of the Roman Church, or with her practical system, knows how very far beyond this the *cultus* of the Blessed Virgin Mary and other saints is carried. When we find a representative man like the late Father Faber writing such a passage as the following, we cannot but feel that he has gone far to justify the Anglican Reformers in removing all invocation of saints from the Offices of the Book of Common Prayer. In his treatise, *On the Interest and Characteristics of the Lives of the Saints*, Faber writes: "This doctrine of Sacchus may minister consolation to some who have been afflicted by the circumstances under which their friends or relatives, recently converted, have died. Converts, professing a warm and ardent devotion to our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph, have drawn near to their end, and in that last hour our Blessed Lady seems to be passed over, or certain adjuncts of Catholic devotion, such as the frequent sprinkling of the bed with holy water, not

to be rightly valued. What was uppermost in their devotional conversation when well, hardly makes its appearance at that solemn crisis, and the religious feelings actually expressed are such as might be expected from a pious Protestant dying in good faith, the desire of the Sacraments always excepted. We know the case of a person who was supposed to be in his last agony, and who, during the few months that had elapsed since his conversion, seemed to have a strong devotion to the Mother of God, and especially to her Immaculate Conception; and yet, when he was assured he had but a few minutes to live, and he was already facing, as best he could, the eternal judgments, he never called on our Blessed Lady, nor alluded to her existence. *He seemed to see nothing before him but God*, and what was distinct was rather even the Person of the Eternal Father than of our dearest Lord. Now this is often painful to Catholic friends. A cold, chilling doubt comes, whether after all the faith of the departed was right, whether there were not some lingerings of old heresy, that evil spirit once exorcised, or whether from bad confessions or some secret fall in the incommunicable temptations of that last hour he had become Satan's prey, or whether he had not been insincere and hypocritical in his loud professions of orthodox devotion when in health." Faber goes on to state that "the true account of the matter is that these persons have not been long enough in the Church to have acquired complete habits of Catholic devotion."

Comment on this teaching is needless. The fact of a man in his dying hour being able to fix his thoughts on the Creator instead of on a creature is thought sufficient to justify the suspicion of heresy, or of his having become the prey of Satan!

To see God in the Beatific Vision is, we are taught, the supreme beatitude of heaven, but, according to Faber, for a dying Roman Catholic to anticipate in some measure this happiness is suggestive of terrible doubts as to his orthodoxy, and can only be excused on the ground that the dying man had not been "long enough in the Church to have acquired complete habits of Catholic devotion"! Does this excuse hold good for St. Stephen the first martyr? Are we to suppose that it was owing to his short life in the Catholic Church that in his dying hour he "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God"? Can we think that if the life of the proto-martyr had been prolonged until after the death of the Blessed Virgin he would have died—not "calling upon God" but—seeing only Mary and Joseph and calling upon them?[1] Such an idea is repulsive in the extreme, and emphasises the gulf that separates the school of Romanists represented by Faber from the Catholic faith and practice of the apostolic Church. It would, however, be most unfair

[1] Dr. Pusey, who certainly knew the Fathers and the history of the Church, writes in a note in his book *An Eirenicon*, p. 110 (1865), "In no instance, among the genuine *Acts of Martyrs*, edited by Ruinart, is any martyr related to have asked for help amidst those super-human sufferings, or otherwise, except from God generally, or from our Lord."

to say that in this matter Faber represents the teaching of the whole Roman communion: he, at the most, represents only a school of thought within the Church of Rome.

As we have said, if Faber's teaching on this point were the logical outcome of any sort of invocation of saints, then our Reformers did well to remove all such invocations from our Offices. Fortunately, we know from the study of the early Fathers that no such teaching can be associated with the invocation of the saints as practised in the early Church. The Catholic custom of asking the saints to "pray for us" is quite distinct from "the Romish doctrine of the invocation of saints" condemned in our Articles of Religion.[1]

[1] Anglican Divines so different in many ways as Bishops Harold Browne and Forbes of Brechin agree that the mere asking the prayers of the Saints as we ask them from friends on earth was not the practice condemned in Article XXII. Bp. Harold Browne (*Art. XXII.* § ii. 3) says that if the custom of invoking "had stopped here"—*i.e.* at saying *Ora pro nobis*—"it would have never been censured. But who will say that *Romish* Saint-worship is no more?" Bp. Forbes (*Art. XXII.* v. p. 421), after saying that Romanists often maintain that their prayers to the saints are "the same *in kind* as the prayers to the saints on earth," adds, "Had this been all, the Article never could have been written." He goes on to show that our Reformers and best Divines saw nothing to reject in such petitions. There are no direct invocations in the early Liturgies, and hence there are none in our Book of Common Prayer.

XI.

Prayer for the Departed in the Primitive Church

"In the Book of the Maccabees we read of sacrifice offered for the dead. Howbeit, even if it were nowhere at all read in the Old Scriptures, not small is the authority, which in this usage is clear, of the whole Church, namely, that in the prayers of the priest which are offered to the Lord God at the altar, the commendation of the dead hath also its place. . . . If we cared not for the dead, we should not, as we do, supplicate God on their behalf."—St. Augustine of Hippo.

XI.

Prayer for the Departed in the Primitive Church

TO pray seems to be an instinct of human nature, and prayer for the welfare of others has always held a place among the petitions offered to the Supreme Being. In all ages those who believed that there is a life after death, and that the soul survives its separation from the body, have, as far as we know, always continued to pray or perform sacred rites for their friends who had passed through death into the life of the unseen world. Thus we find that what are called "prayers for the dead" are by no means found only among Christians, but that, like much else, they came to the Church of Christ through the Jewish Church, and were in common use among all the religions of antiquity. Christianity, it must be remembered, is not an entirely new religion dating from the day of Pentecost —nine days after the Ascension of Jesus Christ. Pentecost was the birthday of the Christian Church as a distinct organism, but the Christian faith was only in a comparatively few points a new revelation. Without denying that God was in some sense the Author of all

religions in so far as they contained truth, there can be no question among those who look upon the Bible as enshrining the Word of God that Judaism was as truly the Church of God before Pentecost as the Christian Church was after that day. We cannot, therefore, expect to find an explicit revelation given to Christianity on points that were already familiar to the Jews. As there was nothing in prayer for the souls of the departed that could in any way offend the Christian conscience, we find no suggestion in any of the Fathers of the sub-apostolic Church that such prayers were forbidden; but, on the contrary, we find that from the very first they were continued in the Church of Christ. The only objection that was ever made in early times to such prayers came from one who was confessedly a heretic.[1] Hence prayers for the departed are found in every Liturgy of the early Church, and every reference to such petitions in the Fathers takes for granted that prayer for the souls of the dead is as much a Christian duty as prayer for those living on earth.

Tertullian—who was born in 160, about thirty years after the death of St. John the Evangelist[2]—speaks of the custom of praying for the dead as well known and long established in his day. He says in his defence of Christian usages: "We offer, on one day every

[1] The Arian heretic Ærius. See St. Aug. *De Hæres.*, n. 53, t. viii. p. 55.

[2] Dr. Newman speaks of "St. John dying within thirty or forty years of St. Justin's conversion and Tertullian's birth."—*A Letter to Dr. Pusey on his recent "Eirenicon,"* p. 40 (1866).

year, oblations [*i.e.* the Eucharist] for the dead as birthday honours."[1] Again, Tertullian speaks of a widow praying for the soul of her husband, and asking that until the resurrection he may be in a place of cool refreshment.[2] The same prayer occurs in the inscriptions found in the catacombs.

It would, then, require a volume instead of a chapter to consider the references in the writings of the Fathers that touch upon the duty of the living to pray for the dead. All that is possible here is to find out for whom among the departed prayer was offered—whether for all, or only for those who were thought of as having died in the grace and favour of God; what were the benefits to the departed sought for in these prayers; and lastly, where was it supposed that the souls were abiding for whom the prayers of the Church were asked—were they in Heaven or in Hades?

1. In trying to answer the question, "For whom among the departed were the prayers of the Church desired in the early centuries?" we have to remember that God alone can know the real spiritual condition of any soul when it passes out of this world.

"He that judgeth . . . is the Lord,"[3] wrote St. Paul, and the same Apostle forbids any man to judge his brother in things spiritual, until such time as he can form a correct estimate. This will only become possible

[1] *De Cor.* v. 3. This most probably, however, refers to commemoration of the martyrs on their feasts.

[2] *Refrigerium* is the word used.

[3] 1 Cor. iv. 4.

when in the final judgment all things shall be made manifest. Here on earth we can only form an opinion from what we see and hear. We cannot see the heart; we cannot always be sure that what we hear is true, and still less can we tell how far heredity, environment, and a multitude of other circumstances may hinder an action, that is in itself wrong, from involving the soul in guilt in the sight of God. Hence the value of bearing in mind the apostolic injunction: "Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."[1]

With this apostolic warning in her mind we find that the early Church prayed at first for all the faithful departed—that is, for all those who had been baptized.[2] Whether she prayed for those who were not Christians we do not know. It seems probable that such were not prayed for in the public prayers of the Church, but were no doubt remembered in the intercessions of their friends and relations who belonged to the Church of Christ.

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[2] This thought—that because God alone knows the state of the soul so He alone knows whither it passes at death—is beautifully expressed in a prayer of the Syro-Jacobite Liturgy of St. Maruthas: "Remember, O Lord, through Thy grace, all those who . . . are departed out of this miserable life, and are *gone where Thou only knowest;* and give them rest among those delights which thou hast promised to them that love Thee, not calling to mind their sins and ours, for no man is without sin." Hence, as St. Augustine said, "sacrifices either of the altar or of alms are offered on behalf of all the baptized dead; they are thank-offerings for the very good, they are propitiatory offerings for the not very bad."

At a very early date it was customary to think of the martyrs as already admitted to the presence of their Lord in Paradise, and therefore not needing the prayers of the Church on earth, but, on the contrary, themselves interceding before God for their brethren. Thus there grew up the custom of commemorating the martyrs and other great saints, and praying for all the rest of the departed. This is made clear by St. Cyril of Jerusalem. He says: "We commemorate also those who have fallen asleep before us, first, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, that at their prayers and intervention God would receive our petition. Afterwards, also on behalf of the holy fathers and bishops who have fallen asleep before us, and, in a word, of all who in past years have fallen asleep among us, believing that it will be a very great advantage to the souls, for whom the supplication is put up, while that holy and most awful sacrifice is presented. And I wish to persuade you by an illustration. For I know that many say, What is a soul profited, which departs from this world either with sins or without sins, if it be commemorated in prayer? Now surely if, when a king had banished any who had given him offence, their connections should weave a crown and offer it to him on behalf of those under his vengeance, would he not grant a respite to their punishments? In the same way we, when we offer to Him our supplications for those who have fallen asleep, though they be sinners, weave no mere crown, but offer up Christ, sacrificed for

our sins, propitiating our merciful God both for them and for ourselves."[1]

The Primitive Liturgies supply many very beautiful examples of such prayers as St. Cyril refers to. In the Liturgy of St. James—which was probably the Liturgy most familiar to St. Cyril—the priest offers a long intercession for the Church, and, in praying for himself and the "deacons that surround Thy holy altar," he continues: "Grant them blamelessness of life, . . . that they may find mercy and grace with all Thy saints that have been pleasing to Thee from one generation to another, since the beginning of the world—our ancestors, and fathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, teachers, holy persons, every just spirit made perfect in the faith of Thy Christ.

". . . Especially the most holy, spotless, excellently laudable, glorious Lady, the Mother of God, and Ever-Virgin Mary.

"*Choir.* It is very meet to bless thee, the Mother of God, the ever blessed, the entirely spotless, more honourable than the Cherubim and infinitely more glorious than the Seraphim, thee, who didst bear without corruption God the Word, thee, verily the Mother of God, we magnify. In thee, O full of grace, all creation exults, and the hierarchy of angels, and the race of men; . . . glory to thee.

"*The Deacon.* Remember, O Lord our God.

[1] *Catech. Lect.* xxiii. 10.

"*The Priest* (*bowing*). Remember, Lord, the God of the spirits and all flesh, the Orthodox whom we have commemorated, from righteous Abel unto this day. Give them rest there, in the land of the living, in Thy kingdom, in the delight of Paradise, in the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, our holy fathers, whence pain, sorrow, and groaning is exiled, where the light of Thy countenance looks down, and always shines."

In the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom the deacon says: "Commemorating the all-holy, spotless, excellently laudable, and glorious Lady, the Mother of God, and Ever-Virgin Mary, with all saints, let us commend ourselves and each other and all our life to Christ our God." Later on, after the invocation of the Holy Spirit for the Consecration, the priest commemorates the saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary, and then prays thus for the rest of the departed: "Remember all those that are departed in the hope of the resurrection to eternal life, and give them rest where the light of Thy countenance shines upon them."

Passing from the first great group of Liturgies to the second,[1] we may quote a passage in the Liturgy of St. Mark as representative of all the others. In the long prayer of intercession we find these words: "Give rest to the souls of our fathers and brethren that have hitherto slept in the faith of Christ, O Lord our God,

[1] The Primitive Liturgies are usually divided into five groups: (1) that of St. James; (2) that of St. Mark; (3) that of St. Thaddeus; (4) that of St. Peter, or the Roman; (5) that of St. John, or Ephesus.

remembering our ancestors, fathers, patriarchs, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, holy and just persons, every spirit that has departed in the faith of Christ, and those whom to-day we keep in memory . . . especially the most holy, stainless, blessed, our Lady Mother of God, and ever-Virgin." So far these prayers have been said by the priest, but now there is a pause, and the deacon says, "Pray, sir, for a blessing"; then the priest says, "The Lord shall bless thee with His grace, now and ever and to ages of ages." After this, "*The deacon reads the Diptychs of the departed. The priest bows down and prays:* And to the spirits of all these give rest, our Master, Lord, and God, in the tabernacles of Thy saints, vouchsafing to them in Thy kingdom the good things of Thy promise, which eye hath not seen, and ear hath not heard, and it hath not entered into the heart of man, the things which Thou hast prepared, O God, for them that love Thy holy Name. Give rest to their souls and vouchsafe to them the kingdom of heaven."

We come now to the third group — the Eastern Syrian Liturgies—of which the Malabar Rite may be taken as an example. The deacon is directed to say: "Let us commemorate the most blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of Christ and our Saviour. . . . Let us venerate the memory of prophets, apostles, martyrs, and confessors; let us pray that by their prayers and the passions which they endured, God may give to us with them a good hope and salvation; that we may

be made worthy of their blessed commemoration, and their living and true promises in the kingdom of heaven. . . . Let us remember also our fathers and our brethren who have departed out of this world in the orthodox faith; let us pray, I say, to the Lord that He may absolve them, and may forgive them their offences, and may vouchsafe that they, with all the just and righteous men who have obeyed the divine will, may rejoice for ever and ever."

The fourth division consists of but one Liturgy—the Petrine—and this is probably of a later date than the other Liturgies, owing to the fact that for some considerable time the Church in Rome used a Liturgy written in Greek. However, both the Petrine and the Ephesine groups form no exception to the earlier Liturgies; they all alike commemorate the saints and all those who have departed. It is perfectly clear, then, that in a wide sense the primitive Church may be said to have prayed for all souls, even for our Blessed Lady and for the saints in Heaven; but there is almost always a distinction to be noticed between the prayers offered for the blessed in Paradise and those offered for others among the departed.

Such prayers are usually separated from each other in the Liturgy, and God is asked to "remember" the saints, or else the priest speaks of "commemorating" them, and then, later on, prays for the other dead, that God would "give them rest," bring them to "the kingdom of heaven," "give them rest in the delight of

Paradise, where the light of Thy countenance always shines," or else, that God may "absolve them and forgive them their offences."

The contrast of these latter supplications with the tone customary in the commemorations of the Blessed Virgin and the saints is noteworthy. All titles of honour and glory are freely used of Blessed Mary—though without direct invocation in the original form of the Liturgies—and God is implored "by the prayers" of the saints and "the passions which they endured" to "give us with them a good hope of salvation." Bishop Forbes, in his Commentary on the Thirty-nine Articles, draws attention to this distinction in these words: "St. Cyril of Jerusalem, in explaining the Liturgy, apparently arranges the departed mentioned in it into three classes: (1) those who are commemorated and not prayed for—'the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, that at their prayers and intercessions God would receive our petitions'; (2) the holy dead prayed for—'then also in behalf of (ὑπέρ) the holy fathers and bishops'; and, (3) of all universally who have fallen asleep among us, believing that it will be a very great advantage to the souls, in behalf of (ὑπέρ) whom the supplication is put up while the 'holy and most awful sacrifice lieth there.'"[1]

In a former chapter we have seen what was the attitude of the primitive Church towards the saints in

[1] Vol. ii. p. 319, Article XXII. The passage of St. Cyril referred to is probably the one quoted on p. 203.

Paradise, *i.e.* towards those who on account of eminent holiness or martyrdom were believed without any doubt to be already with Christ, and therefore in that home where nothing imperfect can enter. These holy ones were "remembered" and "commemorated" in the Divine Liturgy; they were invoked in the prayers of the faithful who visited their tombs. But with regard to the bulk of the faithful the teaching of the Liturgies is not so clear. We must remember that many points that are now more or less universally believed were in the early Church either not discussed at all or else left to the judgment of the individual Christian. We may, however, safely say that while all the dead were prayed for in the primitive Church, yet it was especially thought in the Eastern part of the Church to be a duty to pray for those who had lived a sinful life, and been called away in the midst of their sin, or before they had been able to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Among these there would be some—known of course only to God—for whom no prayers could avail; others there would be who at the great day of judgment would be found acceptable to God, and whose salvation had been helped by the prayers of their friends in the Church on earth.

In the writings of St. Augustine—the great Doctor of the Western Church—we find a suggestion that the purification or perfecting of the souls of the imperfect might be accomplished before the judgment, and that consequently souls that had been excluded at death

from Paradise, might attain to that bright home as soon as they were fit for it. Thus, as early as the fourth century we can find traces of those points of difference between the East and West, on the intermediate state, that later on were elaborated and expressed in the dogmatic decrees of the Roman Church. But of this it will be necessary to treat more at length in a later chapter.

In support of the assertion that, according to the teaching of the Church in the East, the sinful dead were thought of as especially those who were helped by the prayers of the faithful on earth, and that they were believed to be excluded from Paradise, it will be sufficient to quote but one Father—the great Doctor and Saint, John Chrysostom. It is quite evident that he is propounding no new theory of his own, but urging the traditional belief that he had received from an earlier age, a belief for which he claimed the authority, not of the Apostles only, but of God the Holy Ghost. St. John Chrysostom, after showing that the righteous dead are not to be unduly mourned over, since they are with the King and see Him face to face—while, on the contrary, sinners are far from the King—adds: "Let us then not make wailings for the dead simply, but for those who have died in sins. They deserve wailing; they deserve beating of the breast and tears. For tell me what hope is there, when our sins accompany us thither, where there is no putting off sins? . . . Weep for the unbelievers, weep for those, who differ in no wise from

them, those who have departed hence unbaptized, without the Seal! They indeed deserve our wailing, . . . they are outside the Palace, with the culprits, with the condemned: . . . Let us weep for these not one day, or two, but all our life. . . . Let us weep for them, let us assist them according to our power, let us think of some assistance for them, small though it be, yet still let us help them. How and in what way? By praying ourselves for them, by entreating others to make prayers for them, by continually giving to the poor on their behalf. This conveyeth a certain consolation, for hear the words of God Himself, when He says, 'I will defend this city for Mine own sake, and for My servant David's sake.' If the remembrance only of a just man had so great power, how when *deeds* are done for one, will they not have power? Not in vain did the Apostles order that remembrance should be made of the dead in the dreadful Mysteries. They knew that great gain resulteth to them and great assistance; for when the whole people stands with uplifted hands, a priestly assembly, and that awful Sacrifice lies displayed, how shall we not prevail with God by our entreaties for them? But this we do for those only who have departed in the faith, whilst the Catechumens are not thought worthy even of this consolation, but are deprived of all means of help save one. And what is that? We may give to the poor on their behalf, and this in a certain way refreshes them. For God wills that we should be mutually assisted; else why hath He ordered

us to pray for peace and the good estate of the world? why on behalf of all men? since in this number are included robbers, violators of tombs, thieves, men laden with untold crimes; and yet we pray for all; perchance they may have repentance. As then we pray for those living who differ nought from the dead, so too we may pray for them."[1]

Now here we notice that the prayers and alms are desired for the sinful dead who are "outside the Palace, with the culprits, with the condemned," and that "great gain resulteth to them and great assistance" from these prayers, offered at the time of the Eucharistic Sacrifice; we are also told that even to the unbaptized the alms offered in their name bring refreshment. This teaching is referred to in many other parts of the writings of St. John Chrysostom. In one of his homilies on the Acts of the Apostles[2] he writes: "Say if, as we sit together, the Emperor were to send and invite some one of us to the palace, would it be right, I ask, to weep and mourn? But Angels are present, commissioned from heaven and come from thence, sent from the King Himself to call their fellow-servants, and say, dost thou weep? Knowest thou not what a mystery it is that is taking place, how awful, how dread, and worthy indeed of hymns and praises? Wouldst thou learn, that thou mayest know, that this is no time for tears? For it is a very great mystery of the wisdom of God. As if, leaving her dwelling, the

[1] Hom. iii.; Phil. i. 24. [2] Hom. xxi.; Acts ix. 28–38.

soul goes forth, speeding on her way to her own Lord, and dost thou mourn? Why, then, thou shouldest do this on the birth of a child: for this is in fact also a birth, and a better than that. For here she goes forth to a very different light, is loosed as from a prison house, comes off as from a contest. 'Yes,' you say, 'it is all very well to speak thus, in the case of those of whose salvation we are assured.' Then what ails thee, O man, that even in the case of such, thou dost not take it in this way? Say, what canst thou condemn in the little child? Why dost thou mourn for it? What in the newly baptized? for he too is brought into the same condition: why dost thou mourn for him? For as the sun arises clear and bright so the soul, leaving the body with a pure conscience, shines joyously . . . Why mournest thou? Answer me. But it is perhaps only for sinners that you mourn? Would that it were so, for then I would not forbid you to lament . . . Worthy indeed of lamentations are they, [when we consider] the time when they must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, and the words they will then hear, and what they will then suffer! To no purpose have these men lived: nay, not to no purpose merely, but to evil purpose! Of them too it may be fitly said, It were good for them that they had never been born . . . Why, here is a man who has lost all the labour of a whole life; not one day has he lived profitably, but for luxury, debauchery, covetousness, sin, and the devil. Then, say, shall we

not bewail this man? shall we not try to snatch him from his perils? For it is, yes, it is possible, if we will, to mitigate his punishment if we make continual prayers for him, if for him we give alms. However unworthy he may be, God will yield to our importunity. . . . Has he no almsdeeds of his own to plead for him? Let him have at least those of his kindred . . . that his wife may with confidence beg him off in that day, having paid down the ransom for him. The more sins he has to answer for, the more need he has of alms, not only for this reason, but because the alms have not the same virtue now, but far less: for it is not all one to have done it himself, and to have another to do it for him, therefore the virtue being less the alms must needs be more abundant. . . . Many have profited even by the alms done by others on their behalf: for even if they have not got perfect deliverance, at least they have obtained some comfort from them . . . Not in vain are the oblations made for the departed, not in vain the prayers, not in vain the almsdeeds: all those things hath the Spirit ordered, wishing us to be benefited one by the other. . . . It is not in vain that the Deacon cries, 'For them that are fallen asleep in Christ, and for them that make the memorials for them.' It is not the Deacon that utters this voice, but the Holy Ghost: I speak of the Gift. What sayest thou? There is the Sacrifice in hand, and all things laid out duly ordered: Angels are there present, and Archangels: the Son of God Himself is there: all

stand in great awe, and in the general silence those stand by crying aloud: and thinkest thou what is done is done in vain? Then why is not all the rest in vain—the oblations made for the Church, for the priests, and for the whole body? God forbid that this should be in vain! for all that is done is done in faith."

St. John Chrysostom then goes on to say that the mention of the martyrs, "in the presence of the Lord, when that memorial is being celebrated—the dread Sacrifice, the unutterable mysteries," is not for the same object as the mention of the other dead, and he concludes with this exhortation: "Knowing these things, let us devise what consolations we can for the departed. Instead of tombs, instead of tears, instead of lamentations, let us give our alms, our prayers and our oblations, that both we and they may attain unto the promised blessings, by the grace and lovingkindness of . . . our Lord Jesus Christ."

It appears, then, that St. John Chrysostom thought (as the theologians of the Eastern Church still teach) that the sinful dead were not only shut out of Paradise but were "with the condemned"—with the lost souls. For some of the wicked these prayers may have been thought of as merely obtaining an alleviation of their sufferings, but for others it was hoped that by the suffrages and alms of the Church on earth they would eventually "attain unto the promised blessings." St. Chrysostom nowhere implies that such souls are in

a state or place of progress or purification, but on the contrary, he supposes that they depend entirely on what is done for them by their friends and relations on earth: he avoids the difficulty as to those who have none to pray for them by saying that all should be careful to choose as their companions those who will pray for them.[1] From what St. John Chrysostom says, we are led to the conclusion that he believed that even those who were able to receive help from the prayers of their friends would not "attain unto the promised blessings" until the day of judgment.

It should be borne in mind that the saint does not claim the authority of the Apostles and of the Holy Spirit for these matters of opinion, but only for the use of prayers for the departed. It is one thing to pray for the dead, and quite another to attempt to settle how such prayers avail, or how far the departed depend upon them.

In turning to the teaching of St. Augustine—the great Father and Doctor of the Western Church—we find that, equally with St. John Chrysostom, he is perfectly certain that the dead ought to be remembered in prayer, but his teaching on other points is not the same as the doctrine (already quoted) of the Eastern Doctor.

St. Augustine teaches that it depends upon the state in which the soul is at the time of death whether it

[1] Hom. xxi., on Acts ix. 28–38.

can be helped by the prayers of the Church. As none but God can know what this state is, the Church prays, he says, for all the departed. Some need no prayers because they are already perfect, others who are imperfect are helped by prayer and the Eucharistic Sacrifice, while yet other souls are lost for ever and can receive no help from the suffrages of those on earth, or at the best can only obtain some slight alleviation of their suffering. It will be more satisfactory to quote the exact words of St. Augustine, as his teaching moulded the doctrine of the whole Western Church and became the accepted faith (with some slight alterations) of Western Christendom. In his book *The Enchiridion* St. Augustine writes: "During the time which intervenes between a man's death and the final resurrection, the soul dwells in a hidden retreat, where it enjoys rest or suffers affliction just in proportion to the merit it has earned by the life which it led on earth.

"Nor can it be denied that the souls of the dead are benefited by the piety of their living friends, who offer the sacrifice of the Mediator, or give alms in the church on their behalf. But these services are of advantage only to those who during their lives have earned such merit that services of this kind can help them. For there is a manner of life which is neither so good as not to require these services after death, nor so bad that such services are of no avail; there is, on the other hand, a kind of life so good as not

to require them, and again, one so bad that when life is over they render no help. Therefore it is in this life that all the merit or demerit is acquired, which can either relieve or aggravate a man's sufferings after this life. No one, then, need hope that after he is dead he shall obtain merit with God, which he has neglected to secure here. And, accordingly, it is plain that the services which the Church celebrates for the dead are in no way opposed to the Apostle's words: 'We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad'; for the merit which renders such services as I speak of profitable to a man is earned while he lives in the body. It is not, then, to everyone that these services are profitable. And why are they not profitable to all, except because of the different kinds of lives that men lead in the body? When, then, sacrifices either of the altar or of alms are offered on behalf of the baptized dead, they are thank-offerings for the very good, they are propitiatory offerings for the not very bad; and in the case of the very bad, even though they do not assist the dead, they are a species of consolation to the living. And where they are profitable their benefit consists either in obtaining a full remission of sins, or at least in making the condemnation more tolerable."[1]

In an earlier chapter of the same book, St. Augustine

[1] Chaps. cix., cx.

explains the words of St. Paul—"The fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire"—to mean that they who have been too much attached to earthly things will suffer great grief when these things are lost. The things themselves are, as it were, destroyed, but the man himself is saved, "yet so as by fire, because the grief for what he loved and has lost burns him." St. Augustine immediately continues: "And it is not impossible that something of this same kind may take place even after this life. It is a matter that may be inquired into, and either ascertained or left doubtful, whether some believers shall pass through a kind of purgatorial fire, and in proportion as they have loved with more or less devotion the goods that perish, be more or less quickly delivered from it." St. Augustine then explains that this can only be the case with those who have departed this life in penitence, after bringing forth suitable fruits of repentance; among these fruits he lays—as do all the Fathers—great stress upon almsgiving.[1]

Now it is quite clear from the above that St. Augustine did not think of any purgatory of material fire, and therefore his words have no right to be quoted, as they often are, by Roman Catholic controversialists in support of their theory that the fire of purgatory is material fire.

[1] Chaps. lxviii.-ix.

In answer, then, to the question, Who among the dead were prayed for in the primitive Church? we may safely reply, in the words of St. Augustine, All the baptized dead. The object sought in these prayers was the "rest" of the soul, and that was brought about by such means as God willed. As to the place in which it was supposed the dead awaited the resurrection, we do not find that the Fathers teach anything very clearly. Some of the departed are thought of as already at rest in Paradise, while others are "shut out among the condemned," but not in every case without hope of pardon and final acceptance. One thing is abundantly plain, and that is, that the Fathers never thought of Paradise as a place or state into which the sin-stained souls of the faithful departed were admitted in order that they might be purified and make progress. Paradise was never looked upon as the abode of those whom the Church prayed for in the strict sense of the word. It is opposed to all beliefs—Pagan, Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant—to speak, as some few Anglicans do, as if Paradise was a sort of Purgatory.[1] It has never been so regarded by any portion of the Church, Jewish or Christian. The Jews who prayed for their dead did so thinking of those who needed such prayers as suffering in

[1] For example, Dr. Sanderson, in his book, *The Life of the Waiting Soul*, writes, "But the *suffering* in Paradise will be accompanied with an exquisite delight and joy." To associate "suffering" with Paradise is, I believe, an absolute novelty in either Jewish or Christian teaching.

Gehenna. St. John Chrysostom seems to have taught much the same doctrine, while other Fathers leave the question undiscussed. They doubtless prayed, as the Church has prayed ever since, for many whom God knew had already attained the rest that was sought, and in Paradise had no need further of prayer; but this the Church could not know, and so she prayed for the souls of her children that they might attain to the delights of Paradise, even at the very time when she hoped that they were already there. If, however, she had known they were in Paradise, she would still have prayed—if not for their "rest," yet for their final perfect consummation of bliss both in body and soul in the resurrection of the just. It was, however, taken for granted in the case of the martyrs and great saints that they were at rest in Paradise, and hence, strictly speaking, they should be spoken of as commemorated rather than as prayed for in the primitive Liturgies.[1]

[1] See p. 181 for proof that those few Fathers who thought of the dead as unable to enter Heaven until the resurrection thought that they were therefore excluded from Paradise.

XII.

Patristic Teaching on Future Purification

PRAYER FOR THE PURGATION OF A SOUL

(*From Book of Common Prayer*)

O Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of just men made perfect, after they are delivered from their earthly prisons; We humbly commend the soul of this Thy servant, our dear *brother*, into Thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; most humbly beseeching Thee, that it may be precious in Thy sight. Wash it, we pray Thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh, or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before Thee, through the merits of Jesus Christ, Thine only Son our Lord. Amen.

XII.

Patristic Teaching on Future Purification

WE have already referred to the mistaken notion that the Faith of the Gospel was an entirely new revelation, standing in isolation from all that was already commonly believed in the Jewish and pagan religions. Christianity was not an entirely new revelation, but rather the summing up and final expression of all the truths of the natural and supernatural order in the person of Jesus Christ. God "made Him to be the *ἀνακεφαλαίωσις*, or recapitulation, of all the Theism, and of all the truths relating to the nature of man and the moral law, which were already found throughout the world; and has set these truths in their place and proportion in the full revelation of the 'truth as it is in Jesus.'"[1]

"By the unity of doctrine, or faith, the Church has taken up all philosophies and consolidated them in one. Whether by the momentum of an original revelation, or by the continual guidance of a heavenly teaching, or by the mutual convergence of the reason of man

[1] See H. E. MANNING, *Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*, p. 17.

towards the unseen realities of truth, it is certain that all thoughtful minds were gazing one way. As the fulness of time drew on, their eyes were more and more intently fixed on one point in the horizon, 'more than they that watch for the morning'; and all the lights of this fallen world were bent towards one central region, in which at last they met and kindled. The one Faith was the focus of all philosophies, in which they were fused, purified, and blended. The scattered truths which had wandered up and down the earth, and had been in part adored, and in part held in unrighteousness, were now elected and called home, and, as it were, regenerated and gathered into one blessed company, and glorified once more as the witnesses of the Eternal."[1]

It was, however, not all at once that the Church developed out of the deposit of truth committed to her guardianship the full meaning of each doctrine, and placed it in its proper relationship to other truths of the faith. Only as time went on and heresies arose did she examine each region of doctrine, define the truth in exact language, and explain its place in the great fabric of the faith of the Gospel. To this careful unfolding and explaining of the truths of the faith we owe the Creeds of the Church. Each Article represents either a battle with heresy, or the determination of a controversy, or the accentuation of the vital importance of some fact or doctrine. But besides

[1] H. E. Manning (1845), *The Unity of the Church*, p. 205.

those great and fundamental dogmas that found a place in the Catholic Creed, there were other points of doctrine that gradually became more clear to the Church. Among these we may include the doctrine of the Intermediate State of the soul. The Fathers, as we have seen, received from the Apostles the tradition of the value of prayer for the departed, so that while we have proof that such prayers were common in the Church shortly after the death of St. John, we have no hint in any orthodox writer that these prayers were ever looked upon as other than the charitable expression of the hope that sprang from Christian faith. It was, however, only after a lapse of several centuries that anything like a definite doctrine as to the soul between the death and resurrection of the body was formulated, and even then there was not an absolute agreement on all points throughout the whole Church, but the West differed in some respects from the East.

This difference, of which we have seen signs in the writings of St. John Chrysostom and St. Augustine, was later on associated with the doctrine of purgatory. It will therefore be well briefly to trace the growth of this doctrine, and to note how far the East and West were agreed in their teaching; we may thus arrive at the Catholic belief—*i.e.* what was (and is) held by the whole Church of God. In this chapter we will confine ourselves to the Patristic doctrines as to the purification of the soul after death.

There can be no question that in Holy Scripture much stress is laid upon the necessity of repentance, and that by repentance is meant not only the essential turning of the heart from sin to God but also the bringing forth of fruits worthy of repentance. This Bible teaching was emphasised in the penitential discipline that held so prominent a place in the primitive Church, and is the more worthy of notice because the mere profession of the Christian faith during the first centuries involved a more or less suffering life, and might therefore have been supposed to make voluntary self-discipline almost needless. Every degree of persecution—from comparatively trivial insults up to the supreme trial of martyrdom—awaited those who separated themselves from the heathen world and embraced the faith of Jesus Christ. And yet the Church expected all her children to share in her fasts, in her almsdeeds, and in all those daily acts of forbearance and kindness that could not be practised without self-sacrifice. In case of certain serious sins that gave public scandal she also demanded long periods of penance and exclusion from the more solemn parts of the Eucharist; absolution was only granted after the penitent had brought forth fruits meet for repentance.[1]

Such being the condition of Christian life in the sub-apostolic age, it is not surprising that the Church taught

[1] See what is said about this "godly discipline" and "worthy fruits of penance" in *A Commination Service* in the Book of Common Prayer.

her persecuted children to look forward with confidence and longing hope to the time when they should enter into the joy of their Lord. It might even be that He would Himself return before they were called away, but in any case the Church would have them to know that the sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory that should be revealed. The trials of life would soon be over, and then, they who had fought the good fight and kept the faith unto the end would enter into peace and rest; they would be with their Lord, awaiting the time of the resurrection of the body, when they would receive the fulness of eternal beatitude.

But even so, and in spite of her desire to rob death of its terror, the Church had another aspect of the future state to disclose. Had not the Apostle said, "The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide . . . he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"?[1] Had not the Master Himself said, in speaking of the life after death, "Every one shall be salted with fire?"[2] And so, because of these words, so often commented upon by the Fathers, there grew up the belief that not only here on earth must the soul be disciplined by griefs and trials but even in the perhaps far off future judgment all would pass through some terrible ordeal, in which the chaff would be burned and

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 13–15. [2] St. Mark ix. 49.

consumed, while the fine gold would be rendered more bright and all that was stained would be purified. From this "judgment-day purgatory" none, it was thought, would be exempted. The souls already perfected would—like the three children of old—receive no hurt, but, on the contrary, they would reap a richer reward and receive additional glory; others, who up till then were stained and imperfect, would suffer, and yet through suffering be made perfect—"saved, yet so as by fire," while the wholly reprobate would be consumed by the heavy wrath of God.

Thus even in the days when the mere profession of Christianity brought suffering, discipline, and loss, to all who separated themselves from the heathen or Jewish world and became the disciples of the Crucified, the Church was not inclined to pass over the mention of the severity of the judgment of God, or ignore that fiery trial that awaited—it was thought—even the very elect.

In this teaching of Holy Scripture as to the need of repentance manifesting itself in works of penance, and the severity of the coming judgment, we have what is probably the first preparation of the Christian mind for the doctrine of purgatory. The pardon of the sinner did not in this life involve the eradication of all tendency to sin. That was often effected by the endurance of some punishment. It was remembered that David after his great fall was pardoned and yet had to suffer the loss of his child and the continual rebellion

of those near to him. We read that David said unto Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die," and "the sword shall never depart from thy house."[1] This punishment of forgiven sin became known as the temporal punishment due to sin, to distinguish it from the eternal penalty that was remitted together with the guilt. This temporal punishment was not a satisfaction due to the justice of God, but a safeguard to the sinner and a warning to others. The Divine Master had plainly said that, while he who knew his Lord's will and did it not should be beaten with many stripes, yet even he who sinned ignorantly should not altogether escape correction—he should be "beaten with few stripes."[2] Had He not also said, speaking through His Apostle, "Whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he also reap"?[3] Would this be strictly true if the sinner who turned to God only on his death-bed, after a life of sin and neglect of God, were at once numbered with the saints in glory everlasting? Was not the promise given to the penitent thief—that he should pass at once to the presence of his Lord in Paradise—an altogether exceptional reward for an absolutely unique act of faith and repentance? Or,

[1] 2 Sam. xii. 10, 13, 14. [2] St. Luke xii. 47, 48.
[3] Gal. vi. 7.

was not the cross itself, accepted as the due reward of his deeds, that very temporal punishment of which we have been speaking? Certainly, according to the current Jewish tradition of that time, the thief would not have been thought of as passing at once to Paradise. If he was capable of salvation, he would have been thought of as temporarily punished in Gehenna before he could hope to be admitted into Abraham's Bosom.

Our Lord's promise, "To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise," implied not only the remission of guilt, but also the removal of all the evil habits that had been formed in the robber's soul, and the bestowal of all those graces that are essential to the spirit that is admitted to the presence of God. In any case the promise made to the penitent thief can be no guarantee to those who have been brought up in the Christian Church and have not profited by it, but only with a tardy and weak faith turned to God at their last hour. Those who have not been crucified with Christ here, through a willing bearing of the cross, must—it may be supposed—be disciplined hereafter if they are ever to be conformed to the image of the Crucified and numbered with those who have come "out of great tribulation."[1]

From much that we read in the writings of the Fathers of the early Church, it would seem that some such belief as to the future state was either already theirs or steadily growing upon their consciousness.

[1] Rev. vii. 14

They write as if they believed that the faithful Christian—who had been so conformed to Christ here on earth by the sufferings that were entailed in the acceptance of the faith, and by patient bearing of the cross—was at death at once perfected and passed to his reward with Christ in Paradise. Whether they thought that this perfecting of the soul was brought about by some intense act of love towards God at the moment when the soul left the body, or in some other way, they do not tell us. We know that some great teachers in the later Church held that such an act of love and contrition is made in the first instant of the soul's separation from the body, and that this act suffices of itself, through the merits of Christ, to remove all stain of sin from the soul. It may be that this was implicitly held by those Fathers who speak as if all but the very sinful were at once admitted to Paradise. Certainly the idea of suffering has never been associated with the thought of Paradise except by a few very modern Anglican writers who, apparently to conciliate prejudice, and at the same time not altogether part company with the entire Catholic Church from the first, have invented the doctrine that Paradise is a kind of modified Purgatory.[1] The word Paradise

[1] Dr. WRIGHT, in his book, *The Intermediate State* (p. 60), truly says: "The word Paradise is never used in the Apocrypha of any place of training, or school for the righteous, in Hades. The notion of associating that idea with Paradise has no foothold in any Jewish, or partly Jewish, work of antiquity." This is also true of any Christian orthodox work of antiquity.

is a generic term, used always of a place of delight, and therefore applied in the New Testament to Heaven itself. It excludes the idea of pain. Now, it is impossible to exclude pain from the perfecting process by which the souls of the saved but imperfect and sin-stained, are rendered fit for the Vision of God. The pain may be entirely spiritual, but it is in any form incompatible with the notion of Paradise, even if Paradise be not (as Irenæus and others distinctly taught) a part of Heaven.

The early Fathers taught little or nothing as to what was the condition of the imperfect souls who passed out of this life before they had time to bring forth any fruits meet for repentance, or were perhaps called away at the beginning of a period of penitential discipline allotted to them after some crime. Such souls were unfit for Paradise, and yet having departed repentant, they were, it was hoped, among the "saved." They might be thought of as sleeping in unconsciousness until the resurrection, and then perfected by the fiery trial of the great and terrible day of the Lord—"saved, yet so as by fire"—or they might be thought of as passing into an intermediate place of purification and progress, and either attaining to Paradise after the resurrection, or whenever the work of their sanctification was completed.

There are, no doubt, words to be found here and there in the voluminous writings of the Fathers that, if they stood alone, might be understood as teaching the

sleep of the soul. The same is true of some expressions used in Holy Writ, but the drift of both the teaching of Holy Scripture and the Fathers is most decidedly against the literal interpretation of such passages. The Bible certainly uses the word "sleep" in connection with death, but it probably refers to the appearance of the body, and to the withdrawal of the soul from the concerns and activities of this life. There remains, then, the possibility that the imperfect pass at death to an intermediate place, and either remain there until the resurrection or until they are able to be classed among the "spirits of just men made perfect." This last belief is that to which the Holy Spirit finally guided the Church.

The Fathers, however, do not give any distinct name to the place in which they supposed the imperfect awaited their entry into Paradise. Broadly speaking, the early Fathers knew of but two states hereafter—one of joy and one of sorrow. The state of bliss in its perfection was called Heaven; the state of sorrow in its fulness Hell. Perhaps, on the whole, it would not be far wrong to say that the drift of Patristic teaching would tend towards looking upon Paradise as that part of Heaven in which the holy dead were with Christ, beholding God in Christ—a state of unalloyed bliss that after the resurrection would be so intensified as to become a state of glory that admitted of no increase.

But as in Heaven there are many mansions, many

degrees of glory, so it would seem that the Fathers thought of many mansions also in Hades.

Hades included the whole nether world, frequently called by the Fathers the *inferi*, or *infernus*, *i.e.* the infernal regions, or lower parts of the earth. In Hades, therefore, was the place in which the righteous dead had been detained until our Lord "descended into hell" and accomplished their deliverance. This place had never been a place of positive suffering; it was emptied when at His resurrection the risen Lord "led forth the expectant saints to light." But in Hades was also the place of suffering, called Gehenna by the Jews, and Tartarus by the Greeks. Gehenna, again, was thought of by the Jews as the place in which the reprobate were punished and the imperfect purified and made ready for Paradise.

Now, it is here that we find a difficulty in the writings of the Fathers. They were not agreed as to whether Paradise after the Ascension should be thought of as belonging to the *inferi*—the nether world—or to the supernal regions. They were, however, quite agreed in regarding Paradise as a state of rest and joy. Those Fathers who wrote of Paradise as if it were still a part of the *inferi*, *i.e.* of Hades (as it had been indeed before the Resurrection of our Lord), probably did so because of the past associations of the word, and because the Jews (who of course did not allow that the Passion and Resurrection had altered the state of the dead) still spoke of Paradise as a part of Hades. These Fathers,

nevertheless, held that the souls of the perfectly righteous were with Christ, although they wrote of them as if they were in Hades.[1] This as time went on was seen to be a mistake, since Christ after His descent into Hades quitted it and then at His Resurrection ascended into Heaven. It became clear that if the righteous were with Christ they could not be in Hades. St. Irenæus

[1] St. Thomas Aquinas writes thus: "The souls of men could only attain rest after death through faith. Abraham was the best example of faith, as he was the first to withdraw himself from the multitude of the unbelieving: hence the rest that was given after this life to men was called Abraham's bosom. But the souls of the righteous have not always enjoyed the same degree of rest. After the coming of Christ their rest was full, and they enjoyed the Divine Vision, but before the coming of Christ they had indeed rest from pain, but they had not that rest which comes from the attainment of their end, which they still desired. Hence the state of the righteous souls before the coming of Christ may be looked at from the point of view of what they possessed, and so called Abraham's bosom, or from the point of view of what they lacked, and so be called the limbus of hell (*limbus inferni*). This Limbus of the infernal regions and Abraham's bosom were accidentally one and the same before Christ's coming, but they were not *per se* necessarily one. Hence after Christ's coming nothing hindered that Abraham's bosom should still exist and yet be altogether a different place from *Limbus* (*i.e.* Hades), because what is only accidentally one is capable of being separated. It is to be maintained, therefore, that on account of its blessedness the state of the holy fathers was called Abraham's bosom, and on account of its imperfection—*infernus* (*i.e.* Hades), and so Abraham's bosom is not to be thought badly of, nor Hades thought well of, though they were in a certain sense one and the same. Moreover, as the place in which the fathers rested before Christ came was called Abraham's bosom, so also it was still called by that name after He had come, but in a different sense, because before His coming their state was not one of perfect rest and therefore it was called Hades (*infernus*) as well as Abraham's bosom, but after His coming their rest lacked nothing, since they had the Vision of God, and it was therefore still called Abraham's bosom, but never Hades. To this bosom of Abraham the Church prays that the souls of the departed may be brought."—*Summa. Suppl.*, q. lxix. art. iv.

clearly taught that Paradise is a part of Heaven, though he thought none were admitted into it until after the resurrection of the body. Tertullian also in one treatise distinguished between Hades and Abraham's Bosom, for he wrote: "The *inferi* are one place, I deem, and Abraham's Bosom another";[1] but elsewhere he speaks as if the place where the righteous are "cherished" and the others are "punished" were both "in the *inferi*."[2] Origen says that at death "some go into the place called *infernus*, some into Abraham's Bosom, and into different places or mansions." St. Hippolitus[3] and St. Jerome,[4] on the contrary, speak of both the righteous and the imperfect as equally in Hades, though the one comforted and the other tormented.

Another writer is more clear, though he does not distinguish between the unjust who are altogether reprobate and those who are destined eventually for Paradise: "After the departure from the body forthwith there takes place the distinction of the just and unjust. For they are led by the angels to the places meet for them;

[1] *Adv. Marc.* iv. 34.

[2] "Why shouldest thou not think that the soul is both punished and cherished in the *inferi*, under the expectation of either judgment, in a sort of anticipation of it?"—*De Anima*, n. 58.

[3] "Passing the gates [of Hades], those who are brought *down* by the angels set over souls, go not by one way; but the just, light-led to the right" to the place "called Abraham's bosom; but the unjust are dragged by avenging angels to the left . . . to the *confines* of hell."—St. Hippol., *Adv. Græc. et Plat.* n. 1., Gall. ii. 451, 452.

[4] "*Infernus* is a place in which souls are laid up either in refreshment or in pains, according to the quality of their deserts."—St. Jerome, *In Os.* xiii. 14, t. vi. p. 152, Vall.

the souls of the just to Paradise, where is the converse and sight of angels and archangels and of the Saviour Christ in vision, as it is written, 'being absent from the body and present with the Lord'; but the souls of the unjust to the place of Hades."[1] And once more: "We learn from the Scriptures that the souls of sinners are in Hades, below all earth and sea, as the Psalms say, and as is written in Job. But the souls of the just (after the coming of Christ) . . . are in Paradise. For Christ our God did not open Paradise for the soul of the holy robber alone, but for all the souls of the holy thereafter."[2]

Thus, although the Fathers knew of but two main abodes of the dead—Heaven and Hades—yet in each of these there were supposed to be many degrees of glory or suffering. It was evidently, therefore, in Hades that the Fathers believed that the souls of the imperfect were detained, and awaited, either the final judgment, or else the time when the work of their purification should be finished. It is difficult to say if they thought of these souls as detained in that abode in Hades where—until the resurrection of our Lord—the righteous dead had been detained, or if they thought that the imperfect were in the same abode as the reprobate, and thus literally "shut out with the condemned." The Eastern Church has always refused to allow that the imperfect suffered the torment of a purgatorial fire. Some Eastern Fathers seem to teach that these souls suffer

[1] *Qu. et resp. ad Orthod.*, p. 75; in *St. Justin M.*, App., p. 470.
[2] *Qu. ad Antioch.*, q. 19, in *St. Athanasius*, Opp. ii. 272.

only the negative "pain of loss," which consists in their being for a time deprived of the Vision of God. This and the teaching of their ancient Liturgies would certainly suggest the belief that the imperfect are in the place where the righteous dead awaited the opening of the heavens by our Lord; thus they might be spoken of as in "Hell" (*i.e.* Hades) and yet in a state of comparative happiness. This too would explain the fact that prayers were sometimes offered for the refreshment, peace, and rest of the souls of the dead, who were nevertheless spoken of as if they already enjoyed in a measure the blessings that were desired for them. Such prayers would be a petition that the souls who were already so far at rest that they were sure of their final salvation,[1] were no longer harassed with the trials and anxieties of this life, and were perhaps also conscious of a growing nearness to God, might attain the fuller rest, the perfect joy of the Vision of God in Paradise.

There was, however, another aspect of the state of these imperfect souls. If they were thought of as already in some degree enjoying rest and peace, yet they were excluded from Paradise; they were in the *inferi*, not in the supernal realms; they were, that is to say, in Hades, not in Heaven.

Hence we may say that by the time of St. Augustine the whole Church—East and West—had arrived at the

[1] But here again is the difficulty that St. John Chrysostom—apparently speaking of the common belief of his day—implies that some of the imperfect, if not all of them, were not sure of salvation.

belief that the souls of the imperfect were, to quote the words of St. John Chrysostom, "outside the Palace," and therefore in so far as they were outside the Palace they were said to be "with the culprits, with the condemned," and not "with Christ." It was, as we have seen, for these souls especially that the Church was fervent in prayers and in offering the "awful Sacrifice." Such souls were indeed in need of all that could be done for them, since although they were capable of salvation they, perhaps, were not aware of this, and were not yet clothed with the perfect robe of the spotless righteousness of Christ. The absence of guilt is by no means the same thing as the possession of sanctity. The one is a negative, the other a positive state. The removal of the filthy garments from Joshua the high priest was but a preparation for his being clothed in robes of glory. Thus it is written, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."[1] Repentance strips a man of his filthy garments, but the putting on of Christ is another matter.

If a man be not perfectly clothed with the glory of the righteousness of Christ here, he certainly must be hereafter, if he is ever to enter Heaven.

When we ask the question, whether or no the Fathers taught that the souls of the imperfect were

[1] Zech. iii. 4.

made "perfect through suffering" of a more positive kind than the deprivation of the Vision of God, we come to a point on which the East and West eventually came to the same conclusion, though differing in details. Speaking generally, the earlier Eastern Fathers did not go beyond the assertion that—as the Vision of God is not granted to any except the spirits of the just made perfect, in Heaven—the souls of the imperfect detained in Hades do not enjoy the Beatific Vision; they suffer, that is to say, the *pœna damni*—the pain of loss. In the West, on the contrary, we find a growing inclination to interpret the words of St. Paul, "saved, yet so as by fire," in a more literal way. St. Augustine returns to this passage again and again in various parts of his writings. At one time he interprets it quite figuratively, at another he inclines to something very like the more modern belief of the Schoolmen, that the sufferings in Hades are due not only to the pain of loss, but also to sensible torments that are inflicted by material fire. This belief was not by any means the invention of St. Augustine; it had been expressed in more or less figurative language by some of the earlier Fathers. But it was undoubtedly due to St. Augustine that the doctrine became the popular belief of the whole Western Church for many centuries, and has maintained a firm hold upon the belief of the Roman Church down to the present day. Among the Fathers who wrote as if the souls of the imperfect suffered not only the pain of loss, but also the pain of sense

(*pœna sensus*), may be mentioned Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and St. Cyprian. In his *Stromata*, St. Clement (second century) writes: "The believer, through great discipline, divesting himself of the passions, passes to the mansion which is better than the former one, taking with him the characteristic of repentance (ἰδίωμα τῆς μετανοίας) for the sins he has committed after baptism. He is tormented then still more, not yet or quite attaining what he sees others to have acquired. Besides, he is also ashamed of his transgressions. The greatest torments are indeed assigned to the believer. For God's righteousness is good, and His goodness is righteous. And though the punishments cease in the course of the completion of the expiation and purification of each one, yet those have very great and permanent grief who are found worthy of the other fold, on account of not being along with those that have been glorified through righteousness."[1] In another passage there is a possible reference to the same belief in the words: "We say that the fire sanctifies not flesh, but sinful souls; meaning not the all-devouring vulgar fire, but that discriminating [φρόνιμον] fire which pervades the soul that passes through it."[2]

St. Cyprian writes: "It is one thing to stand for pardon, another to arrive at glory; one thing for him who has been cast into prison not to go out thence till he has paid the uttermost farthing, another to

[1] *Stromata*, vi. 14. [2] *Stromata*, vii. 6.

receive at once the reward of faith and virtue; one thing for a man to be tortured for his sins by lengthened anguish, and thus to be cleansed and purged by long exposure to the fire, another to have washed away all his sins in martyrdom; in a word, it is one thing to wait in suspense unto the day of judgment for the Lord's sentence, another to be immediately crowned by the Lord."[1]

We have already quoted one well-known passage from the writings of St. Augustine,[2] so that it will be sufficient here to show that he thought it quite possible that the sufferings of the soul in the intermediate state of purification might be very severe. He writes: " . . . for all that, though we be *saved by fire*, yet will that fire be more grievous than anything whatsoever a man can suffer in this life. And you know how great sufferings bad men have endured, and may endure; yet their sufferings are only just so great as good men may have endured also. . . . The evils which are [endured] here are far more tolerable [than those hereafter]; yet observe how men often do anything which you command them, that they may not suffer them. How much better it would be if they would also do what God commands, that they might not suffer those more grievous ills"[3] hereafter!

To sum up what may be gathered from the Fathers as to a state of progress and purification after death we may say: (1) That all who speak on the subject

[1] *Epist.* 55, *ad Antonianus*, 16.

[2] See pp. 216–7.

[3] On Psalm xxxviii., verse 1.

taught either a judgment-day purification or Purgatory through which all must pass, or (2) a purification preparatory to a millennial reign of Christ on the earth, or lastly (3) an intermediate state of purification in Hades ending either at the judgment or when the work of the soul's perfecting was accomplished, before the resurrection of the body. This last belief certainly approaches very nearly to the doctrine that became identified in the later Church with the word "Purgatory." It differed, however, from the later doctrine in this, at least—that the imperfect were not at this time always thought of as certainly saved, but rather as capable of salvation. They were (as we shall see) sometimes prayed for as if it yet remained to be seen if "hell" would "swallow them up," or if they should eventually be delivered from its power and enter Paradise. There can be no doubt at all that at first the idea of Purgatory —in anything like the present meaning of the word— was a private opinion of some few of the Fathers, put forward speculatively. We find no suggestion of it in the Liturgies. The public prayers of the Church were from the first offered for the rest, peace and refreshment of the departed, and sometimes also for freedom and release; not, however, from the fires of Purgatory as a distinct place of suffering, but from sin and its consequence—eternal captivity in Gehenna, the penal part of Hades. Prayers and oblations for the departed were universal; but every kind of opinion existed as to the meaning and effect of those prayers.

The whole Church of God from the very first unquestionably attached the greatest importance to prayers, both public and private, for the departed, but the Church was content simply to pray, give alms, and offer the holy Sacrifice, without attempting to dogmatise as to the condition of the souls for whom she prayed. We see, nevertheless, from the primitive Liturgies that she desired something more for the departed than a joyful resurrection and merciful judgment at the last day. She prayed for them that even now they might obtain rest and peace, that they might be released from captivity and attain to the delights of Paradise. With but few exceptions the Fathers also spoke as if the righteous were already with Christ in Paradise. Those who were shut out of Paradise she commended simply to the mercy of God. She did not profess to say exactly in what way her prayers were effectual, or for what souls they would or would not be accepted. All these matters were known to God; her duty was to pray without ceasing and to leave the rest to the Father of spirits. Into His hands she could safely commend her children, in the hope that they might at once be numbered among the "spirits of just men made perfect,"[1] and therefore enter into their Father's home, and live with Him in the heavenly kingdom.

Not only at the approach of death but also long after the soul had left the body would the primitive Church have offered to God some such prayer as that contained

[1] Heb. xii. 23.

in our Offices:[1] "O Almighty God, with Whom do live the spirits of just men made perfect, after they are delivered from their earthly prisons; we humbly commend the soul of this Thy servant our dear brother, into Thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; most humbly beseeching Thee that it may be precious in Thy sight. Wash it, we pray Thee, in the Blood of that Immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the sins of the world: that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh, or the wiles of Satan, being *purged* and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before Thee."

Here we have something near akin to the Patristic doctrine of Purgatory, if by Purgatory we understand the process—whatever it may be—by which the soul is washed in the Precious Blood for the pardon of its sins, and its defilements are "purged and done away," so that it may be admitted to the society of the spirits of just men made perfect who are with God and enjoy the Beatific Vision.

[1] See "A Commendatory Prayer" in the Office for the Visitation of the Sick in the Book of Common Prayer. What I have ventured to call the Patristic doctrine of Purgatory is simply this, that God would hereafter—*i.e.* at the moment of death or afterwards—do for the soul what He is asked to do in this prayer, leaving the time and means employed entirely to His mercy and wisdom.

XIII.

Teaching of the Mediæval and Greek Church

"The Holy Eastern Church is now, as she was from the beginning, multiplex in her arrangements, simple in her faith, difficult of comprehension to strangers, easily intelligible to her sons, widely scattered in her branches, hardly beset by her enemies, yet still and evermore, what she delights to call herself, One, Only, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.

"Such she is: and yet being so, she has not escaped, any more than her great Head, the tongue of calumny. Protestant controversialists attack her because she holds uncorrupted the Faith of St. Athanasius and St. Chrysostom: Roman theologians condemn her as a withered and sapless branch, cut off from the communion of the first See, and now ready for the fire. . . ."—Dr. NEALE.

XIII.

Teaching of the Mediæval and Greek Church

IN the last chapter we noticed the various floating opinions found in the writings of the early Fathers as to the future state of the soul. St. Augustine had said that there might possibly be some purifying suffering in the life after death; he could not say more than that this was a "matter that may be inquired into and either ascertained or left doubtful, whether some believers shall pass through a kind of purgatorial fire, and in proportion as they have loved with more or less devotion the goods that perish, be more or less quickly delivered from it."

What St. Augustine left thus an open question in the fifth century was practically settled for the Western Church by St. Gregory the Great in the seventh. St. Gregory states plainly that "there is a purgatorial fire before the judgment." In this sentence we have the beginning of a point of difference between the Church in the West and the Eastern Church, a point that later on was to cause serious trouble and dissension. There was no dispute that, both in Holy Scripture and the

Fathers, fire was spoken of as one of the future means of purification and punishment, but the Eastern Church maintained that this must be understood as a figure of speech as far as the time between death and the resurrection of the body was concerned, since the immaterial soul could not suffer from material fire. The Western theologians would not agree to this, and insisted with St. Gregory that there is a purgatorial fire before the judgment. They either thought that the soul could be touched by material fire, or more probably that fire was not material.

There was, however, no discussion as to where this fire was situated, or where the imperfect souls were detained. When the question was raised both East and West came to the same conclusion. There were but two main and distinct abodes of the dead, and as nothing imperfect could enter Heaven it followed that the imperfect souls must be in Hades. As, moreover, the thought of suffering had never been associated with the place in which the holy dead had before the Passion awaited their redemption, it was clear that if the souls of the imperfect were in a state of suffering—and both the East and West were agreed that such was the case—they could not be in that place which had been left empty when our Lord arose from the dead and took with Him all who had there awaited His coming. Hence both the East and West came to the conclusion that the souls of the imperfect were sent to the penal part of Hades and were in the same place as the repro-

bate, or quite near them. Here the Latins taught that they were purified, and from this abode they were sooner or later set free and admitted into Paradise.

This was not a new doctrine; it had been held, like many another opinion, by some of the Fathers, or at least it had been implied in their teaching. Origen had received some such belief from Clement, and indeed had spoken as if there were no everlasting punishment for any, but only a temporary purgation in Hades. What Origen had whispered St. Gregory of Nyssa had proclaimed as from the housetop.[1] Thus the idea of some souls being only temporarily punished in Hades was quite a familiar one, though occasionally associated with a denial of any eternal punishment.

At the time of the final separation of the East from the West in the eleventh century, the whole Church was agreed upon the following points as to the life of the disembodied soul: first, that the perfectly righteous were at once admitted to the joy of their Lord; next, that all the imperfect souls were sent to Hades, whence those who were capable of salvation were delivered when the work of their perfecting was accomplished; and lastly, that the perfecting of the souls of the dead in Hades depended to a great extent, if not altogether, upon the prayers, alms and sacrifices of the Church on earth.

Both the Eastern and Western theologians taught

[1] It is not certain, however, that the passages referred to are not interpolations made by Origenists.

that the souls in Hades endured great suffering. The Greeks, however, as we have said, denied that the soul, apart from the body, was punished by fire. From this doctrine the Greeks have never departed. Thus by the time of the great schism the dogmatic teaching of the Greeks had taken what we may call its final form, but the old Liturgies remained unaltered. Hence the discrepancy that at first sight is so perplexing between the tone of the prayers for the departed in the primitive Liturgies and the dogmatic belief of the Orthodox Eastern Church. It was not, however, the Eastern Church only, but the whole Church, that held the belief that the imperfect were detained in the same place as the reprobate, and as the Roman Liturgy represents a later age than the Greek Liturgies it is in the Latin Missals and mediæval collects that we have a record of this belief preserved. Thus in the Greek Liturgies is preserved the language and undefined beliefs of the primitive Church; these Liturgies have not been altered to bring them into accord with the later dogmatic developments, and consequently the Liturgies alone cannot be appealed to as settling the present dogmatic faith of the Orthodox Church.

In the same way, in the variable portions of the Latin Liturgy, which to a large extent are of mediæval origin, we have prayers that teach what is no longer the dogmatic belief of the West, but the doctrine she once held, and which is still retained by the more conservative East. The Greek Liturgies do not express

the full teaching of the present Eastern Church, but the more vague aspirations of primitive Christianity; the Latin Missals likewise do not teach the full current belief of the Roman Church as to Purgatory, but the mediæval belief.

In order to offer some proof that this is the case it will be well to turn to the Roman Liturgy to show that the mediæval Latin Church once taught the doctrine that is taught at this day by the Greeks alone. A few quotations may then be made from standard theologians of the modern Orthodox Church to prove that the Greeks do retain the older belief abandoned by the West. It will then be interesting to note that the dogmatic decree of Trent to some extent was a rejection of the mediæval and Greek doctrine and a return to the more reasonable atmosphere of the early Church, in leaving everything an open question except the mere existence of a state of purification hereafter. We shall also note how the wise reserve of Trent has been made of no effect by the unbridled imagination of the Roman Catholic theologians who have continued to teach and even to elaborate still more what was well named the "Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory"—a doctrine disowned by the Council of Trent.

There is every reason to believe that the earliest Liturgy used by the Roman Church was in Greek and of an Oriental character. The Canon of the present Roman Mass dates, it is commonly supposed,

from the time of St. Leo. St. Gregory the Great is known to have made some changes in the Mass, but the Ordinary and Canon have, as Hammond says, "remained unaltered" since his day. This, of course, does not apply to the variable parts of the Mass which have been added at different times. Now, if we compare the ancient commemoration of the departed in that part of the Mass that dates from the age of St. Leo (*i.e.* the Canon) with the later special prayers of the Requiem Masses, we find a striking change of tone. The commemoration in the Canon is worded after the primitive pattern of the Greek Liturgies. The priest is directed to say: "Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants and handmaids N. and N., who are gone before us with the sign of faith, and slumber in the sleep of peace. To these, O Lord, and to all that rest in Christ grant, we beseech Thee, a place of refreshment (*locum refrigerii*[1]), light, and peace. Through the same Christ our Lord." Here we have the language of the Church in her pristine purity. But turn to the Mass for the Dead, and we come face to face with the belief of the mediæval Church and that now taught by the Greeks. In the *Offertorium* of this Mass the priest says: "O Lord Jesus Christ, King of glory, deliver the souls of all the faithful departed from the pains of hell (*de pœnis*

[1] The equivalent of this word (*refrigerium*) is not to be found, I think, in the primitive Liturgies, but it is the word used by Tertullian in a passage where he speaks of a widow praying for her husband's soul.—*De Monogamia*, c. x.

inferni[1]) and from the deep lake; deliver them from the mouth of the lion, that hell swallow them not up (*ne absorbeat eas Tartarus*), that they fall not into darkness; but may the holy standard-bearer Michael lead them to the holy light, which Thou didst promise to Abraham and to his seed. We offer to Thee, O Lord, sacrifices and prayers: do Thou receive them on behalf of those souls of whom we make memorial this day: grant them, O Lord, to pass from death to life: which Thou didst promise of old to Abraham and his seed."

This prayer would exactly express the hope prevalent among many of the Jews of old, or that of some of the early Fathers, but it is inconsistent with the present Roman teaching as to Purgatory. According to all Roman theologians the Church does not intend to pray

[1] In mediæval theology *Infernus* is the name given to the place of the reprobate in Hades, and not merely to the whole nether world. St. Thomas Aquinas writes: "We do not pray for those in Paradise, because they have no need of prayers; nor for those in hell (*in inferno*), because they cannot be loosed from sin."—*Summa*, App., q. i. art. i. The above *Offertorium* is often referred to by the great post-Reformation Anglican Divines. (See Abp. USSHER's *Answer to a Challenge made by a Jesuit in Ireland*; Abp. Bramhall's works; also Bp. Jeremy Taylor's works.) The learned Spanish Doctor Johannes Medina confessed: "Although I have read many prayers for the faithful dead in the Roman Missal, yet in none of them have I read that the Church doth petition that they may be more quickly freed from pains; but I have read in some of them a petition that they may be freed from eternal pains." Medina excuses these petitions and others on the ground that though "not altogether true or apt" (*quamvis non omnino vera sint vel omnino apta*) they are to be tolerated, "seeing such prayers were made by private persons, not by councils, neither were approved by councils."—JO. MEDINA. *In Codice de oratione, quæst.* 6.

for any but the *faithful* departed—that is to say, those who have died in the grace of God, and are consequently certain of their eternal salvation, and absolutely out of danger of falling into Tartarus, the prison-house of the damned. The Jews and Greeks might use the prayer as it stands, for the Jews were —and the Greeks still are—accustomed to think of some souls as falling into Gehenna for punishment and correction, who nevertheless are not destined to be swallowed up by Tartarus, but to escape therefrom. The Jesuit theologian Schouppe tries to explain away this Offertory on the ground that it is meant as a prayer for one at the point of death, or but just departed. This plea is, however, not satisfactory, since the Offertory is said at all Masses for the departed, and is thus used not only on the day of departure, but on anniversaries long years after death. It would be better to acknowledge that this Offertory is a survival from an age in which the doctrine of Purgatory had not reached its present form, and consequently that the Offertory must be understood as accommodated by the intention of the celebrant to the doctrine now prevalent in the West.

Archbishop Bramhall,[1] writing of this Offertory, says, "Nor can this petition be anyways so wrested as to become applicable to the hour of death. This prayer is not for the man, but for the soul separated; not

[1] Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland, 1660. See *Answer to M. de la Milletière*, in Bramhall's *Works*, vol. i. p. 59.

for the soul of a sick man, or a dying man, but for the souls of men actually deceased. Certainly this prayer must have referred to the sleeping of souls, or to the pains of Hell ; to deliverance out of Purgatory it can have no relation. Nor are you able [he is writing to a Roman Catholic controversialist] to produce any one prayer, public or private, neither any one indulgence to that purpose, for the delivery of any one soul out of Purgatory, in all the Primitive times, or out of your own ancient Missals or records."

But this is by no means the only prayer in the Missal and Office Books of the Latin Church that bears witness to the earlier beliefs, and is consequently in some measure inconsistent with the doctrine of Purgatory as a distinct place into which only those can enter whose sins have been already pardoned before death, and who are therefore conscious of their eternal salvation. That magnificent hymn—the *Dies Iræ*—which is said or sung as a sequence at certain Masses for the dead, puts into the mouth of those who at the last day are called to the judgment-seat of Christ words and prayers which imply that the dead are uncertain as to their salvation. No doubt the whole Sequence is highly dramatic, but it expresses a belief that would certainly not have been held by one who taught the modern doctrine of Purgatory, since a part of that doctrine is that the righteous dead—for whom alone these Masses are offered—are perfectly aware of their final salvation. The *Dies Iræ* seems

to teach that the dead are raised after a long sleep and suddenly called to judgment. They know not what to expect and, conscious of their sinfulness, appeal in helpless eagerness to the infinite mercy of their Redeemer. The Church—looking forward to this judgment—prays that when that awful day at last dawns, the dead may meet with pardon and acceptance.

The hymn appeals powerfully to some of the deepest Christian instincts, but from a doctrinal point of view it represents the undefined longings of the early Church rather than the precise definitions of Roman dogmatic theology.

If we turn to the collects of the Missal and the Office of the Dead in the Breviary, we find many expressions that do not well accord with the universal teaching of Roman Catholic theologians of the last three hundred years. The collects pray for the remission of the sins of the departed, and for their escape from the gates and pains of Hell. By "Hell" is evidently meant, not Hades generally, but the place of the reprobate in Hades. Now, the only sins for which a soul is condemned to Hell — according to modern Roman theology—are mortal sins, and these are not supposed to be pardonable after death. It would seem, therefore, that prayers for the escape of a soul from the gates of Hell and the pains of Hell (*inferni*) must be intended to help a soul that is in danger of Hell, but the Roman theologians deny that they intend to pray for any who do not depart

this life in a state of salvation; hence the petitions referred to must be explained away or accommodated if they are applied to the souls in Purgatory.[1] There is, however, always room for difference of interpretation in the wording of such prayers, and it is to the dogmatic teaching of a Church that we must turn to clear up what is vague in its devotional language. In order, therefore, to prove that the Latin Church at one time taught the same doctrine as the Eastern Church—that all the imperfect souls are sent for a time to *Infernus* —we have only to turn to the teaching of the greatest theologian of the mediæval Latin Church, whose authority is, even to this day, supreme in the Church of Rome—St. Thomas Aquinas, "the Angelic Doctor." Pope Leo XIII., writing of St. Thomas, says that he "towers above all other scholastic Doctors as their master and prince." St. Thomas lived at a time when the Western Church was much concerned with the subject of reunion with the Greeks. He died on his way to attend the Council of Lyons (1274), and this Council was occupied with the subject of the reunion of the East with the Church of the West. It is quite clear that at the time he wrote his book on the Sentences St. Thomas hesitated as to the belief that the reprobate and imperfect were alike in Hell, and inclined to accept the opinion that had been gaining ground in the West, that Purgatory and the Hell of the reprobate are distinct from one another.

[1] See note, p. 257 (Medina).

Thus we find in his *Commentary on the Sentences*,[1] written about the year 1256, that St. Thomas, in discussing the question "whether the souls (of the imperfect) are purified in the same place in which the damned are punished," argues that Purgatory and the Hell of the lost are one and the same place. He quotes the words of St. Gregory the Great, "that as in the same fire gold is clarified and straw burned, so in one and the same flame sinners are consumed and the elect cleansed." St. Thomas adds: "Therefore as the fire of Purgatory and *Infernus* (Hell) is one and the same, so they (Purgatory and Hell) are the same place."[2] Shortly after he writes less confidently. He says: "As to the place of Purgatory we have no express teaching in Scripture, and therefore we cannot be positive. Probably Purgatory is a place beneath, joined to Hell (*Infernus*) in such a manner that it is the same fire which torments the damned in Hell and purifies the just in Purgatory." St. Thomas concludes, therefore, in this early work of his "that Purgatory is either in the same place as Hell or close to it"; he is not able to decide which. It may be well here to emphasise a fact which is often forgotten, namely, that the assertion that there is a place or state of purgation, *i.e.* a Pur-

[1] A Commentary on Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences*. St. Thomas died before he had completed the *Summa*. To supply in a measure what he had left unfinished it is usual to add a Supplement to the *Summa*, taken from the *Commentary on the Sentences*, written by St. Thonas at an earlier date. Some portion of this supplement was omitted by the compositor of the *Summa* and is now given as an "Appendix."

[2] *Summa*, App., q. i. Art. ii.

gatory, hereafter settles nothing concerning this place as to where it is; hence, although St. Thomas is quite clear of course that "There is a purgation after this life" (*purgatio restat post hanc vitam*),[1] that this purgation is extremely painful (*pœna Purgatorii minima excedit maximam pœnam hujus vitæ*),[2] and that the instrument of punishment is fire (*animæ . . . ab igne corporali punientur*),[3] yet he is not sure if all this takes place in the Hell of the damned or in a place apart. In this uncertainty we mark the transition from the general belief, that had for some time prevailed, that the imperfect were undoubtedly in Hell, though only for a time. With this in our mind we can quite understand the *Offertorium* already quoted: it is a prayer that Hell may not retain or swallow up the souls, but that they may escape from Tartarus and be placed with the perfected souls in the Bosom of Abraham.[4]

By the time of the Council of Florence (which was summoned to effect the reunion of the Eastern and Western Churches) in 1439, the Latins had come to the belief that Hell and Purgatory are not identical, and thus they differed from the Greeks on two points, namely, that Purgatory is a place distinct from Hell, and that the souls are punished therein by corporeal fire.

The fact that eventually the Greeks rejected the

[1] *Summa*, App., q. i. Art. i.

[2] *Ibid.*, q. ii. Art. i.

[3] *Ibid.*, Suppl. q. lxx. Art. iii.

[4] St. Thomas writes as to suffrages for the dead that the words *in inferno nulla est redemptio* mean there is no redemption from the hell of the damned for those who are finally (*i.e.* not temporarily) condemned to its sufferings.—*Summa*, Suppl. lxxi. Art. vi.

decisions of the Council of Florence is often used as an argument that the Eastern Church teaches a doctrine as to the intermediate state entirely unlike that of the Latin Church. It will be well, therefore, to notice what the Greeks and Latins held in common at the Council of Florence.

We read in the history of the Council written by Sylvester Sguropulus, of which a Latin version was published in the year 1560 by Robert Creyghton, Dean of Wells, that Mark, Archbishop of Ephesus, defended the Greek Church at the Council and began by asking in a not too conciliatory tone whence the Latin Church derived her tradition as to Purgatory. Cardinal Julian answered to so good effect, and produced so many witnesses from the Fathers, that Mark was forced to exclaim, "This shows how the mountain of controversy becomes a molehill when men meet for mutual explanation. We had heard that the teaching of your Church was different from what we are now told. As you have explained it I find but a small difference between us on this point, and I hope, if God so wills, it may soon be set straight."

Now, we naturally ask, What was the doctrine the Latin Church put forward with which the East was in almost complete agreement? It was this: The souls of the saints ascend at death straight to Heaven and enter into eternal rest. Those who have sinned and have not yet completed their penance, or brought forth sufficiently the fruits of penance, are cleansed in a

purgatorial fire (*subeunt flammarum infernalium expurgationem*), and freed from it sooner or later as they deserve. When freed they at once join the blessed in Heaven. The reprobate are immediately cast into the Hell of the damned.

The result of the debate which followed this statement of Western doctrine was that the Latins did not define the points of difference, and left it an open question whether there is a special place of purgation and a purgatorial fire apart from the *infernus* of the damned. All that the Council decided was that "Those who have died truly penitent and in the love of God, but before they have made satisfaction for sins of omission and commission by worthy fruits of penitence, are purified (*purgari*) after death by purgatorial pains (*pœnis purgatoriis*); to the relief of these pains avail the suffrages of the faithful, *i.e.* the sacrifices (*sacrificia*) of masses, supplications and alms, and other pious works, which the faithful are wont to do the one for the other, according to the custom of the Church. The souls of those who die after baptism and are altogether without sin, and those who after they have been stained with sin have been cleansed either before or after death, are then at once received into Heaven and have the clear vision of the Triune God, as He is, but one more perfectly than another according to their merit; while the souls of others who depart in mortal sin, or even in original sin, descend to *infernus* to be punished in different degrees."

Now, it is quite true that the Greeks eventually

rejected the decrees of the Council of Florence, but it does not at all follow that their own belief was nearer the truth than that of the Council, or, still less, that they approached what may be called the Protestant opinions of later times. Mark (the Archbishop of Ephesus) indeed, after the Council was over, exaggerated the points of difference, but he did so more because of personal irritation than because the molehills had really been transformed into mountains. This is witnessed to by the fact that Gregory, the Grand Penitentiary of Constantinople, maintained that the Latin doctrine was laudable and good. We must remember that the Greeks had no defined doctrine of their own, but held, as the Fathers had done, many different opinions as to the future state. Thus Mark, when he protested against the Council, adopted a doctrine quite at variance with that which he had but a while before said was almost the same as that of his own Church, and which the Greek Grand Penitentiary afterwards declared to be laudable. Now, this diversity still remains among the Greeks. There are those among them who appear to hold the doctrine which Mark finally adopted, and there are others—and these by far the more authoritative—who hold a doctrine of the intermediate state very similar to that of the Latin Church.

In order to state the case quite fairly we will quote the opinion finally adopted by Mark of Ephesus when he desired to widen the differences between the East and West. He wrote against those of his countrymen

who yielded to the definition of the Florentine Council: "We say, that neither the saints do receive the kingdom prepared for them, and those secret good things, neither the sinners do as yet fall into Hell: but that either of them do remain in expectation of their proper lot; and that this appertaineth unto the time that is to come after the resurrection and judgment. But these men, with the Latins, would have these to receive presently after death the things they have deserved: but unto those of the middle sort—that is, to such as die in penance—they assign a purgatory fire, which they feign to be distinct from that of Hell, that thereby, say they, being purged in their souls after death, they likewise may be received into the kingdom of Heaven together with the righteous." We note that the Council did not define, as Mark implies, that there was a purgatory *fire*. That was purposely not defined in order to meet the wishes of the Greeks. We notice also how the Latins are said to have now come to the conclusion that the purgatorial fire is distinct from that of Hell—a conclusion towards which we have seen St. Thomas was inclined, but one that was not in his day decided. Why did Mark draw attention to this? In all probability because among those Greeks who accepted the decrees of Florence there were some who were still inclined to resent this teaching of the Latins. They had accepted the decisions of Florence, but the Council had said nothing as to whether the Purgatory pains were endured (as the Greeks believed) in Hell, or in a place apart. The

Latin theologians, however, were going beyond the Council and asserting that Purgatory was a place distinct from Hell. Mark made use of this difference of teaching to create discord between the Latins and Greeks. We know that he was successful, and that to this day those Greeks who agree with the Latins that the imperfect souls suffer hereafter insist with vehemence that this suffering is not endured in Purgatory, but in Hell. To prove that such is the present belief of the representative theologians of the Greek Church, we will conclude this chapter with a few quotations from some of their more modern dogmatic theologians of unquestionable authority.

We must remember that until the seventeenth century there are no authoritative expositions of the doctrines of the Eastern Church, other than the writings of St. John Damascene. Peter Mogila, one of the greatest authorities of the Russian Church, who was made Metropolitan of Kieff in 1632, to stem the tide of Latin teaching in the Church of Little Russia drew up an exposition of the doctrine of the Eastern Churches. The Council of Jassy approved his work, and finally, after careful revision, it received the signature, or *imprimatur*, as we should say, of the four Patriarchs. It also received the *imprimatur* of eight other Metropolitans, or Bishops, and thirteen Ecclesiastics of the Great Church. This *Orthodoxa Confessio* by Mogila is therefore not to be gainsaid or put aside as a merely unofficial work. It is the voice of the East raised in opposition to both

Romanism and Calvinism. It is said to be slightly tinged with Latinism, but as it was composed to oppose Romanism we may take for granted that the Latinism was adopted from a conviction of its truth. Now, what does this Orthodox Confession say as to the soul in the intermediate state? We are told in the "Confession," which is in the form of question and answer, that there is a particular judgment at the moment of death—in the sense that the souls then know how they stand in the sight of God—and consequently each soul at death goes to its own place; that there are different degrees of reward for the righteous;[1] that, although all the reprobate will be eternally punished, yet some will suffer more than others;[2] that, although there are no souls in a middle condition[3] between the rewarded and the punished, yet "it is certain that many sinners are freed from the chains of Hades, not by their own repentance or confession . . . but for the good works and alms of the living and for the prayers of the Church made in their behalf, and chiefly for the sake of the Unbloody Sacrifice which the Church daily offers up for the living and the dead. . . . It is clear that after the separation [of the soul from the body] the soul can no more perform penance, nor do any other works whereby it might be freed from the chains of Hades, therefore only the prayers, the sacrifices and the alms which are done by the living, on their behalf, do comfort and greatly benefit the

[1] Reply 62. [2] Reply 63. [3] Reply 64.

souls, and free them from the bonds of Hades. We are therefore taught by the Holy Scripture and the exposition of this Father [Theophylact] that we ought by all means to pray for the departed, to offer the Unbloody Sacrifice for them, and to dispense our alms with a liberal hand, seeing they can no more perform these good works for themselves."[1]

A caution is given that although the souls of the righteous are in Heaven, while those of the wicked are in Hell, neither shall receive their final reward until the last day. It should be added that the Orthodox Confession denies that there is any temporary purgatorial fire, or that the souls are delivered from the pains of Hades (*i.e.* Hell) by other means than the suffrages of the Church. It is for this reason, it is said, that the Orthodox Church is so solicitous in her prayers for the departed.

Turning to our next authority, we come to the Articles of the Council of Bethlehem (1672). This Council was assembled by the celebrated Dositheus, who had been raised to the Patriarchal Throne of Jerusalem in order to stamp out the Calvinist heresy, which had obtained a strong position in the Greek Church. The Council defined the doctrine of Transubstantiation in explicit terms, as well as many other doctrines denied by the Calvinists, and concerning the state of the departed it decreed: "We believe that the souls of the dead are in bliss or torment according to their actions. For, on

[1] Reply 65.

being separated from their bodies, they pass instantly either into joy or into sorrow and woe. Yet they receive not perfect bliss nor perfect misery till after the general resurrection, when the soul shall be united to the body in which it lived, either in virtue or vice. Those who, having been defiled with mortal sins, have not died in despair, but have repented while yet alive, yet have not brought forth any fruit of repentance . . . (we believe) that the souls of these, and such as these, descend to Hades, and there suffer the penalty of the sins they have committed; but that they have a consciousness of their (approaching) deliverance, and that they are delivered by the Supreme Goodness through the prayers of the priests, and the alms which their relations offer for the dead; to which end the unbloody Sacrifice chiefly avails, which each offers in particular for his own relations who have fallen asleep, and the Catholic and Apostolic Church offers daily for all in common. [It must, however, be borne in mind that we know nothing of the time of this deliverance. For we know and believe that such as these will be delivered from their sufferings before the general resurrection and judgment; but when, we know not."][1]

We turn from these official and weighty confessions, that carry with them the authority of Councils, Synods and other representations of the living voice of the

[1] The translation in the Russ differs slightly from the Greek. The Russ was altered to eliminate all trace of Latinism, but the Greek represents the decision of the Council. The words in brackets are omitted in the Russ. See Hardouin, *Concil.*, tom xi. p. 180 *seq.*, and Dr. J. M. Neale's *Hist. of Eastern Church* (gen. int.), vol. ii. and *Alexandria*.

Orthodox Eastern Church, to the volumes written by Macarius, Bishop of Vinnitza, and formerly Rector of the Ecclesiastical Academy of St. Petersburg. Here we read: "According to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, there is after death no intermediate class between those who are saved and go to Heaven and those who are condemned and go to Hades. There is no intermediate place where those souls are which only repent before death; all such souls go to Hades, from whence they can only be delivered by prayer."[1]

Again, "The Orthodox Church teaches, like the Church of Rome, (*a*) that the souls of certain of the dead—to wit, of those who die in faith and repentance, but without having had the time to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, and by consequence to deserve of God a complete pardon of their sins, nor to purify themselves therefrom—endure torments until they are judged worthy of such pardon and truly purified; (*b*) that in such an estate the souls of the dead derive profit from prayers said in their favour by their brethren in Christ who are still alive, from their works of charity, and especially from the oblation of the unbloody Sacrifice."[2]

Again, in the Confession of another Orthodox Greek we read: "There are certain persons who do not enjoy salvation immediately after death, but receive it potentially and by way of hope—hope, I maintain,

[1] Vol. ii. p. 729 In the *Confessio Orthodoxa* (Quest. 68) Hades is distinctly said to be the abode of the damned and of the devils.

[2] Vol. ii. p. 726.

both firm and sure; persons who, having been tried by the paternal discipline of God, are held worthy of being made happy in very reality in due time."[1] Once more, the Eastern bishops in their correspondence with the Non-Jurors at the beginning of the eighteenth century, denounce the Roman doctrine of Purgatory, and state their own belief in the following words: "As for the purgatorial fire invented by the Papists to command the purse of the ignorant, we will by no means hear of it. For it is a fiction and a doting fable invented for lucre and to deceive the simple, and, in a word, has no existence but in the imagination. There is no appearance of it in the sacred Scriptures or holy Fathers, whatever the authors or abettors of it may clamour to the contrary. But we say that the benefactions and holy sacrifices, the alms and prayers of the Church and her priests for the dead, are the things that greatly profit them, and not the purgatorial fire which does not by any means anywhere exist. For these (*i.e.* the prayers, etc.) relieve the pains which the souls suffer in Hades, as is plain from the Centurion whose son the Lord healed at the Centurion's petition, and from the paralytic whom He recovered by a double cure, for the faith of those who brought him to Him, and might be proved from a thousand other instances as clear as the sun."

Again, Macarius writes: "Though the Orthodox

[1] Met. Critopuli, *Conf.*, xx., where he says the pains are "per afflictionem et angustiam conscientiæ."

Church teaches that all sinners, immediately after death and the partial judgment upon them, go into Hades, the place of grief and pain, it teaches also at the same time that to some sinners who repented before their departure from this life, without having previously been able to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance (such as prayer, contrition of heart, relief of the poor, and manifestation of their love to God and their neighbour by their works), there still remains the possibility of obtaining an alleviation of pain, and even full release from the bonds of Hades."[1]

It will be seen from this statement, and from the authoritative documents already quoted, that the Orthodox Eastern Church teaches that all sin-stained souls (*i.e.* the imperfect as well as the reprobate) pass at death into Hades, "the place of grief and pain." She denies that there is any intermediate *place* in Hades, reserved for the perfecting of the penitent. From this suffering state (τῶν δεινῶν, as it is called by the Synod of Bethlehem) the penitent are delivered by the prayers, etc., of the Church on earth. They pass either before or at the resurrection into Heaven—Paradise—where they are with Christ, and "see God face to face."[2] At the resurrection they receive their spiritualised bodies, and are thus made partakers of the state of glory. For the reprobate there is no deliverance from Hades. At the resurrection they are clothed with their bodies and "cast into the lake of fire"—the state of misery—the "second death."

From these passages it is plain that the Greek doctrine

[1] p. 704. [2] See App. pp. 400–1.

is as far removed from any form of popular Protestant belief as the Roman, and has no affinity with the novel teaching of a section of the High Church party in England which makes Paradise into a kind of modified Purgatory. Paradise among the Greeks, as among the Latins and Protestants, is (since the Ascension of our Lord) believed to be simply one of the names for Heaven.

This is made clear in several official documents. One extract from *The Orthodox Confession* will suffice to show that on this subject there is no disagreement between the East and West. We read that: "The person, therefore, who calls that place (*i.e.* where the saints are) by any of those names that we have mentioned (*e.g.* Paradise, Abraham's Bosom, etc.) will make no mistake, provided he clearly recognise that these souls are in the favour of God and in the kingdom of Heaven, or, as the hymns of the Church say, in Heaven."[1] Another writer says: "There are certain persons who, after their departure from this life, obtain forthwith the same condition of life as Christ, for the Apostle would not have desired to be dissolved unless he had certainly known that he would be immediately with Christ." But there is no need to multiply quotations, since the Greeks strongly deny that there is any intermediate place between Heaven and Hades, and consequently are bound to teach that all who do not pass to Hades are received into Heaven.

There is, of course, no question that some of the early Fathers thought that Paradise might still be, as it was

[1] Reply 67.

before the resurrection of our Lord, a part of the lower world; they seemed to believe some such doctrine as was put forward by Mark of Ephesus after the Council of Florence. But there can be no doubt that the Greeks have rejected this belief—which Macarius says was never more than a "private opinion." Whether it might be held privately now by a member of the Orthodox Church is uncertain.

To sum up the Greek doctrine (which was once also held by the Latins), we may say they teach: (1) After death there is a particular judgment; (2) After the particular judgment the souls that are perfect ascend to Heaven — which the Greeks call also Paradise and Abraham's Bosom; (3) The souls that are unfit for Heaven are sent to Hades,[1] where they suffer spiritual pains, and are assisted by the suffrages of the Church on earth; these souls are set free from Hades and enter Heaven as soon as they are perfected; (4) The souls in Heaven await their full reward—the perfect consummation of bliss both in body and soul at the last day; (5) Those incapable of salvation fall into Hades and are swallowed up of it; they await an increase of sorrow in body and soul at the last day.

This appears to be the more authoritative teaching of the Orthodox Church. She is absolutely united in her practice of prayer for the departed, but tolerates various views on the details of eschatological doctrine.

[1] The Latins also teach that the imperfect are in Hades, but in a special part of it which they call "Purgatory."

XIV.

Purgatory—Roman Dogma

"The lesson which we are intended to learn from the Church of the old covenant appears to be that a real religious authority admits of being so much misused as to become completely misleading."—CANON GORE.

XIV.

Purgatory—Roman Dogmatic Teaching

AS we are now to consider the teaching of the Roman Church on the intermediate state, it is necessary to distinguish clearly between what the Roman Church herself authoritatively teaches by her Councils and dogmatic decrees, and the large additions to this authoritative teaching made by her theologians.

The Roman Church may be said to provide a text which is the Roman dogmatic teaching, and upon this text the theologians raise up a doctrinal structure which practically becomes, in the common estimation, as authoritative as the text itself. These additions of the theologians form the Romish doctrine. There is, however, a very real distinction between dogma and the doctrine of theologians. The dogmatic teaching holds a place apart, and cannot be questioned by any orthodox Roman Catholic. To deny a doctrine that has been solemnly defined by the authority of their Church would be accounted heresy, while to deny what is not defined but only commonly taught by theologians, would, at the worst, not exceed the sin of "rashness." A doctrine that has been defined by

a Council is called a dogma of "Catholic faith"; the consent of theologians upon a point of doctrine is known as a "common opinion."

This distinction is often ignored by those outside the Roman Church, who suppose that everything that is commonly taught in the Church of Rome is equally binding upon the faith of her members. Thus no distinction is made between the Roman teaching which is *de fide* and the Romish doctrine—concerning this official teaching—put forward by theologians. On the other hand, the distinction is often unduly exaggerated by Roman Catholic controversialists, who draw attention to the very little that the Roman Church teaches as *de fide* upon some matters of belief, and imply that no one is required to believe more. As a matter of fact no one is considered a "good Catholic" in the Church of Rome who limits his belief to the dogmatic faith as defined by the Councils. Such an one would not of course be considered a formal heretic, but he would be what is almost worse in the popular ecclesiastical mind—a "liberal" Catholic, and if he ventured to speak or write against the popular undefined belief fostered by the common consent of theologians, his attitude would be censured as "scandalous," and his writings and words as "rash, pernicious, injurious to the Church, leading into error, erroneous, favouring heresy, blasphemous, impious, and offensive to pious ears." Such are some of the official expressions reserved for those who depart—not from the faith but

—from the common opinions of the theologians, or, in other words, from the Romish doctrine.

While, therefore, it is quite necessary to note that there is a great distinction between the dogmatic faith of the Roman Church and the doctrine of the Romish theologians concerning the faith, yet it is equally important to remember that it is the Romish doctrine that is everywhere taught in the Church of Rome, and that this *quasi* authoritative teaching represents her doctrinal and practical system much more adequately than the more vague dogmatic decrees of the Councils. Consequently it is disingenuous for Roman controversialists to argue as if any who could accept the teaching of the Councils would find themselves at home in the Roman communion. When the Church of Rome is willing to reckon as good Catholics those who do not assent to more than her dogmatic creed, and when she really disowns the additions to her faith that form so large a part of what is everywhere taught in her pulpits and encouraged in her popular devotions, it will be time enough to discuss how far her dogmatic creed expresses the common faith of the whole state of Christ's Church. In the meantime we may remember that it has been very generally confessed that it was the practical abuses which were fostered by the Romish doctrine, that necessitated a reform in the sixteenth century, and even at the present day it is this practical system that is mainly objected to by those outside the Roman communion, and by not a few of those within.

And yet there is no sign of any willingness among the rulers of the Roman communion to effect any reform. Only lately Anglo-Roman bishops[1] have insisted upon the acceptance of the Romish doctrinal and practical system as being quite essential. They write: "No one, calling himself a Catholic, can doubt the obligation of giving a firm assent to all revealed doctrines that are defined or universally held by the Church as of 'Catholic Faith,' and this under pain of heresy and being cut off from the Church and salvation. . . . But it may be well to insist . . . that Catholics are bound to give their assent also to the decisions of the Church concerning matters appertaining to or affecting revelation, *though these matters be not found, strictly speaking, within the deposit of Faith.* Such matters are, for instance, the interpretation of Scripture; the canonization of Saints; . . . and the condemnation of false doctrines by the Holy See." The bishops go on to show that Roman Catholics are committed to even more than this, and must give "religious obedience" to teaching that "does not fall under the head of revealed truth, nor even under the endowment of her"—the Roman Church's—"infallibility, but under the exercise of her ordinary authority to feed, teach and govern the flock of Christ." They then proceed to lay down principles that would involve, for instance, the tacit assent to such

[1] "A joint pastoral letter on the Church and liberal Catholicism by the Cardinal Archbishop and the bishops of the province of Westminster," Dec. 29, 1900. The Pope has written his approval of this Pastoral in a special Encyclical Letter to Cardinal Vaughan.

a decision as that by which Galileo was condemned for teaching that the earth moved. They write: "In such a case," *i.e.* as the interpretation given by the Roman Congregations to a disputed passage of Holy Scripture, "loyal Catholics should accept her decision, by virtue of religious obedience, as the one to be followed for the present. But while they gratefully accept such guidance in a matter that concerns religion, they will be careful to distinguish between this guidance and the Church's definitions of faith."

Thus the Pastoral recognises what has been said above as to the difference between the dogmatic decisions of the Roman Church and the Romish doctrine, but it also asserts that no one can be a "good Catholic" who does not accept the Romish doctrine and the decisions of the Roman Congregations, which it calls the "guidance" given by the Church.

This guidance, we are told, is given in various ways, "by pastoral letters of Bishops, diocesan and provincial decrees; and, though standing respectively on higher ground as being of a superior order and covering the whole Church, many Acts of the Supreme Pontiff, and *all the decisions of the Roman Congregations*." In fact, the Pope and the Roman Congregations seem *par excellence* to be proposed as guides. It is well to remember that if the "guidance" of some of the Popes, *e.g.* Liberius and Honorius, etc., had been followed, the Church would have been led into heresy—and that Pope Honorius was condemned as a heretic by several

Councils;[1] it is also well not to forget that the Pope presided over the meeting of the Roman Congregation of the Inquisition which condemned Galileo in 1616. The guidance which these two authorities—the Pope and his Roman Congregation—then gave to the world is contained in the decree condemning as "false, unscriptural and destructive of Catholic truth" the fact that the earth moves round the sun! And yet we are now told in the twentieth century that the Roman Congregations offer a superior and highly authoritative form of guidance "covering the whole Church." In a similar case to Galileo's the right attitude for a modern man of science would be, "for the present," to accept this guidance, and that not grudgingly but "gratefully."

Two points are now, we hope, abundantly clear: first, that there is ample room for strong protest against Romish doctrine, even by those who could accept the dogmatic decrees of the Roman Church; and also, that the Church of Rome practically requires much more than belief in the dogmas defined by her Councils. And yet, when occasion serves, Roman controversialists are quite ready to make use of the argument that this practical system is not *de fide*, and that it is to her Councils we must turn to ascertain what is the real teaching of the Roman Church. At the beginning of the Oxford Movement this line of argument was

[1] The Fathers of the sixth Œcumenical Council cried out, "Anathema to the heretic Honorius!" The name of Pope Honorius was placed in the Roman Breviary among other heretics until the seventeenth century.

popular. Mr. Palmer—of Worcester College—in his controversy with Cardinal Wiseman wrote: "The language of the Council of Trent has been your invariable refuge whenever we have pressed you hard with the errors and superstitions prevalent in your Church. To this alone you would gladly direct our attention as presenting the only exposition of doctrine authorised by all the Churches in communion with Rome. Whatever else may be held or practised amongst you is, you would assure us, only a matter of private opinion or practice—quite *unauthorised!* And your Church is therefore to be held responsible for nothing but the comparatively guarded statements of the Council of Trent. . . . This is a very convenient system of argument. It enables you to avoid any discussion on the weak points of your Church, and to raise an outcry against the prejudice and bigotry of those who would venture to impute superstition . . . to the Church of Rome generally. It will be my endeavour to show that there is some authoritative teaching in the Church of Rome besides that of the Council of Trent; and when you can show that the . . . superstitious doctrines and practices thus authorised in your Church are openly opposed and condemned by any influential portion of its members—but not till then—we shall be willing to relieve your communion from the imputations which must, at present, adhere to it."[1]

To-day Rome has changed her policy in England.

[1] *Letters on Romanism.*

Having gained, as she hopes, a firm foothold, she no longer minimises her teaching, but demands implicit "religious obedience" to all she has devised. Dr. Pusey often insisted that it was this *quasi* authoritative teaching of the theologians, and the practical Roman system (not the dogmatic decrees), that formed—before the Infallibility was defined—the real barrier between England and Rome. Now, considering that the Roman Church claims to be the whole Church of God on earth, and that outside her communion there is no covenanted salvation, it seems amazingly cruel that she should drive people from her fold, and keep multitudes from entering it, by insisting upon opinions and practices which are confessedly in no way essential, or part of the original deposit of faith committed by our Lord to the Church; and that she should insist upon the acceptance of her opinion upon subjects on which she acknowledges she may be mistaken, and have eventually—as in the case of Galileo—to retract.[1] We cannot see the spirit of Christ in such an attitude.

Since the definition of the Infallibility all hope of reunion has for the time necessarily been lost. And yet it is not the dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope that, with the bulk of people, forms the main ground of difficulty as to the Roman Church. To the historian,

[1] The possibility of error is allowed in the "Joint Pastoral," but this is said to be no excuse for rejecting the decisions of the Roman Congregations.

indeed, this dogma is a crux greater than any other, but to most men it is still the Romish doctrine as distinct from the dogmatic faith of Rome that bars the way, in their estimation, to reunion.

As Dr. Pusey truly said: "The Council of Trent laid down, in many cases, what is very far below the practical system, encouraged at present everywhere in the Church of Rome, taught in her name, and with her authority, but which, on being questioned, no Roman Catholic, I believe, would declare to be *de fide*. And yet, take not ourselves only, but the general body of Englishmen, whether instructed or not instructed, it will be of this as yet undefined body of practical belief that they will be thinking when they speak of our 'reformed Church,' or against becoming Roman Catholics. If they speak against Papal authority it is not in itself (which would be a matter of indifference), but as an authority, which, if they submitted to it, would enforce upon them that practical system. Probably too there is an hereditary dread of the renewal of the fires of Smithfield, the sinfulness of which has never been disowned."[1] And again, "I doubt not that the Roman Church and ourselves are kept apart much more by that vast practical system that lies beyond the letter of the Council of Trent, things which are taught with a *quasi* authority in the Roman Church, than by what is actually defined. Nothing could be more unpractical than for an individual to throw him-

[1] *An Eirenicon*, p. 99.

self into the Roman Church because he could accept the letter of the Council of Trent."[1]

But it is not only those outside the Roman communion who have recognised and deplored this fact. To quote but one example of the many that have in one way or another pleaded for the recognition of what is essential and what is not, we may refer to Father Duggan's book, *Steps towards Reunion*. After showing that the infallibility of the (Roman) Church is not even supposed to extend to all that is taught in her communion and is not concerned at all with matters of discipline, he adds: "We Catholics always have said that on questions of discipline it is possible for us to give up anything . . . But on doctrine can we surrender anything? I show that, contrary to what is commonly said by Catholics, we can surrender a vast body of doctrine. We can surrender all that is taught not by the Church but in the Church by theologians. And the difference between what is taught by the Church and what is taught by theologians is enormous. The quantity of what the Church teaches is not great; all the definitions put together would make a very small book. Even if we added the Catechism of the Council of Trent, which is also the teaching of the Church, though not so authoritative as the definitions, still the book would be small. Whereas theologians have written an immense number of books . . . There is of course no doubt that we

[1] *An Eirenicon*, p. 98.

can surrender practically all that theologians teach over and above what the Church teaches."

In turning to the dogmatic teaching of the Roman Church on the intermediate state we find it is very little. It is contained in the decrees of the Council of Florence and the Council of Trent. We have already quoted the definition of the Council of Florence.[1] The Council of Trent decreed that, "There is a Purgatory, and the souls there detained are relieved by the suffrages of the faithful, but chiefly by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar." To this should be added the Canon passed in the sixth session, "If any one shall say that, after the grace of justification received, unto every penitent sinner the guilt is so remitted, and the penalty of eternal punishment so blotted out, that there remains not any penalty of temporal punishment to be discharged in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of Heaven can be laid open; let him be anathema." This is all that the Church of Rome herself teaches as to the intermediate state.

With reference to this dogmatic teaching we may note that the Council of Florence limits the possibility of purification in the next world to those who "have departed truly penitent and in the love of God." This appears to unduly narrow the hope of salvation. Some of the Fathers who speak of a purification after death had chiefly in their mind those sinners who gave little,

[1] See p. 265.

if any, sign of departing in the love of God or of being truly penitent. To make this decree of Florence as wide in its hope as that of these early Fathers it should be explained that by "those who depart hence truly penitent," etc., is meant those who depart capable of salvation; and by the words, "others who depart in mortal sin, or even in original sin descend into *infernus* to be punished in different degrees," is meant that if any are incapable of salvation they are excluded from Heaven, and so are punished. It is certainly true that in this world the consequences of sin are not removed at the same time as its guilt. Many a penitent has to bear the temporal punishment of sins long since bitterly repented of. The loss of a good name, the injury to health, the sting of regret, the withdrawal of the friendships that have been so valued a part of life, all these temporal punishments too often remain long after the penitent has heard the absolving word, "The Lord hath put away thy sin."

How far some spiritual discipline will be required hereafter is not revealed, though we are distinctly told that chastisement is not necessarily inconsistent with the love of God for the soul. We read that, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons. Furthermore we have had

fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them;[1] but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." But this correction is entirely educational, and not inflicted as a means of paying off a debt by suffering.

As long, then, as any suffering there may be hereafter for those who are the sons of God and destined for the Father's house, is thought of as a continuation of the loving discipline by which God leads us to holiness in this world, there can be no difficulty. If, on the contrary, by "satisfaction" made through "purgatorial pains" it is meant that God inflicts suffering merely as such, and is pleased to see suffering and propitiated by it, then we can only reject the doctrine as altogether heathenish. We cannot think that punishment hereafter is vindictive, even in the case of those who may have hardened themselves into a state that may render them incapable of ever finding joy in the presence of God. Their punishment is perhaps involved in their own spiritual condition of hardened rebellion and undying remorse, from which all repentance is absent. Still less can we think that God would

[1] Marginal reading.

torment or allow to be tormented those who are daily being more and more conformed to the likeness of His Son. It may, however, be true that the soul that loves God even ever so little will suffer a hunger and thirst after righteousness which may be painful in its intensity after it has seen the Face of Christ in the particular judgment. In this sense its purgatorial pains may be necessary and inseparable from its condition, which is yet imperfect. Who can deny a soul may suffer that knows itself imperfect and at the same time knows as before it had never known the beauty of holiness? The pain of such a soul is that of which the Psalmist speaks, "Like as the hart desireth the water-brooks, so longeth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul is athirst for God, yea, even for the living God: when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?" As there is nothing in the dogmatic teaching of the Roman Church as to torments and fires in the intermediate state, it would seem that the definition of Florence might be explained in such a way as to make it quite in accord with Holy Scripture and the teaching of the Eastern Church.

Turning to the Council of Trent, we find that it either added nothing at all to the decree of Florence, or else merely defined what had been for centuries the belief of the West (though denied by the Greeks), that the souls of the departed are purified and perfected in a part of Hades distinct from the Hell of the reprobate. This assertion seems to be altogether reasonable. It

is entirely repugnant to our minds to think of those who are destined for Paradise as imprisoned with the devils and the maliciously wicked. But even the assertion that Purgatory is a distinct place is more than the definition of Trent necessarily teaches. Its statement that "Purgatory exists" (*Purgatorium esse*) may be understood of a state quite as well as a place, and it is so explained by the Jesuit Father Hunter in his volumes entitled *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*. After saying that the brief decree of Trent contains "the whole of the defined doctrine of the Church upon the subject," he adds, speaking of the fact that death does not, as far as we know, of itself perfect the soul, "it follows therefore that some process of cleansing is possible, and this process is called Purgatory, from the Latin word meaning to cleanse."[1]

Some years ago a Belgian Jesuit Father, in referring to the dogmatic teaching of the Council of Trent on Purgatory, wrote:—

"Nothing can be wiser than these decrees. The Council did not decide anything as to whether Purgatory is a particular place in which the souls may be enclosed, after what manner they are purified, whether it is by fire or otherwise, what is the severity of their pains, nor what is their duration, to what precise point they are assisted by the prayers, by the good works of the living, or by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, etc. . . .

[1] Vol. iii. p. 442.

"Theologians can have their opinions upon these various questions, but they are neither dogmas of faith, nor are they absolutely certain, and no one is forced to subscribe to them."[1]

It is true "no one is forced" under pain of actual heresy to subscribe to the Romish doctrine, but, as we shall see in the next chapter, very much is forced upon the belief of Roman Catholics who desire to "think with the Church," as they say.

The points in the Conciliar decrees on Purgatory that seem to need explanation are those, then, connected with the meaning of the words "who die truly penitent and in the love of God," and the reference to satisfaction hereafter made by bearing the "temporal punishment" due to sin. We have no certainty that any "temporal punishment" is meted out unless it be—as it is on earth—educational, corrective, or exemplary.[2] If it is intended to teach that a soul fit for Heaven—free, that is, from all stain of sin, and perfected in holiness according to its capacity—is detained in Purgatory simply in order that it may endure tortures which are merely punitive, then such a doctrine of temporal punishment in the future life seems inconsistent with all we know of God's dealings with us here, from which we are wont to argue as to what He will do hereafter.

The well-known lines in Dr. Newman's poem, *The*

[1] *Let us not Forget our Dear Dead*, F. VARSEUR, S.J.

[2] See p. 313.

Dream of Gerontius, are an example of the way in which the statements of the Councils of the Roman Church as to "purgatorial pains" may be taken in a purely spiritual sense:—

> "When then—if such thy lot—thou seest thy Judge,
> The sight of Him will kindle in thy heart
> All tender, gracious, reverential thoughts.
> Thou wilt be sick with love, and yearn for Him,
> And feel as though thou couldst but pity Him,
> That one so sweet should e'er have placed Himself
> At disadvantage such, as to be used
> So vilely by a being so vile as thee.
> There is a pleading in His pensive eyes
> Will pierce thee to the quick, and trouble thee,
> And thou wilt hate and loathe thyself; for though
> Now sinless, thou wilt feel that thou hast sinned,
> As never thou didst feel; and wilt desire
> To slink away, and hide thee from His sight;
> And yet wilt have a longing aye to dwell
> Within the beauty of His countenance.
> And these two pains, so counter and so keen,—
> The longing for Him, when thou seest Him not;
> The shame of self at thought of seeing Him,—
> Will be thy veriest, sharpest purgatory."

The statement made by the Council of Trent as to the value of suffrages for the departed is—it need hardly be said—perfectly in accordance with what was believed in the primitive Church, and with what is now, as formerly, taught in the Eastern Church. To deny that the departed are to be prayed for, or that the Eucharist is to be pleaded on their behalf, would be to cut one's self off from all historical Christianity.

Prayers for the departed have been valued by the whole Church of God from the very first; they spring from that deep-rooted spirit of faith, hope, and love which has refused to allow that death is destructive of those mutual good offices which the Christian Church insists upon in her doctrine of "the Communion of Saints."

XV.

The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory

"OF PRAYER FOR SOULS DEPARTED"

From *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man*, commonly called *The King's Book*, published by authority of King, Parliament, and Convocation in sixteenth century.

"It is much necessary that all such abuses as heretofore have been brought in by supporters and maintainers of the papacy of Rome, and their complices, concerning this matter, be clearly put away; and that we therefore abstain from the name of purgatory, and no more dispute or reason thereof. Under colour of which have been advanced many fond and great abuses, to make men believe that through the Bishop of Rome's pardons souls might clearly be delivered out of it, and released out of the bondage of sin; and that masses said at Scala Cœli and other prescribed places, phantasied by men, did there in those places more profit the souls than in another; and also that a prescribed number of prayers sooner than other (though as devoutly said) should further their petition sooner, yea, especially if they were said before one image more than another which they phantasied. All these, and such like abuses, be necessary utterly to be abolished and extinguished."

XV.

The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory

THERE are few among those who believe that the next life is one of progress who could not accept the dogmatic teaching of the Roman Church as to Purgatory, if Purgatory be explained to be the name given to the means by which progress is made, whatever those means may be. When we pass from the dogmatic to the Romish popular teaching as to Purgatory we at once understand what is meant by our Article XXII., which says that "The Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory (*Doctrina Romanensium de Purgatorio*) . . . is a fond thing vainly invented and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God."

It is very necessary clearly to distinguish between a belief in a future process of purification and spiritual growth—a belief held as an opinion in the Eastern Church, by multitudes of Protestants of all denominations, and by very many Anglicans—and the Romish doctrine *concerning* this process. This distinction is a well-understood one. It is, for instance, quite possible

to believe firmly that "there is a Heaven, or Paradise," and yet confidently to assert that "the Mohammedan doctrine concerning Paradise is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God."

To some extent this distinction was recognised by the Council of Trent itself, which published "a decree touching Purgatory" that ran as follows: "The holy Synod enjoins on bishops that the sound doctrine on Purgatory, delivered by the holy Fathers and sacred Councils, be believed. . . . But let the more difficult and subtle questions, and those which tend not to edification, and from which for the most part there is no increase of piety, be excluded from popular discourses before the uneducated multitude. In like manner such things as are uncertain or which labour under an appearance of error, let them not allow to be made public and treated of. But those things which tend to a certain kind of curiosity, or superstition, or which savour of filthy lucre, let them prohibit as scandals and stumbling-blocks of the faithful."[1]

Unfortunately, the good intentions of the Fathers of Trent have been for the most part frustrated, and those abuses which sprang from the "difficult and subtle questions" that the theologians and pious writers are chiefly concerned with have by no means been abolished, though they may have suffered some abatement. The Romish doctrine settles everything "concerning Purga-

[1] Session xxv. The first part of this decree is quoted on p. 289.

tory" that the Councils left undecided. Thus, according to Romish doctrine, it is everywhere taught (1) that the souls in Purgatory are tortured with pains the least of which is greater than the worst torture imaginable on earth; (2) that the souls are tormented by material fire, and according to some by devils; (3) that the Pope can grant indulgences applicable to the souls in Purgatory; (4) that the Pope can make an altar "privileged" so that every Mass said at such an altar offers to God a sufficient satisfaction to free a soul from Purgatory; (5) that the Blessed Virgin on certain occasions descends into Purgatory and delivers those who were devout to her; and a multitude of similar fables.

As all this body of Romish doctrine is everywhere taught in the Roman communion, it is difficult to choose quotations from the immense storehouse there is to draw from. One might begin with the *Summa* of St. Thomas Aquinas, and in the writings of every approved theologian down to the present day find abundant material; to this we could add, by way of supplement, the whole mass of legends and revelations to be found in the *Lives of the Saints* and in the approved books of devotion used in the Roman communion throughout the world. All that is here possible is to give a typical quotation on each of the above points from a standard work of theology, or a well-known spiritual writer.

I. *As to tortures.*—Quotations have already been

given from Aquinas.[1] The Catechism of the Council of Trent—a work of great authority—says: "There is a purgatorial fire, where the souls of the righteous are tortured by a temporary punishment (*ad definitum tempus cruciatæ expiantur*) that entrance may be given them into their eternal home, where nothing that is defiled can have a place." Pope Benedict XIV. writes, in his explanation of the *Offertorium*, to which reference has been made:[2] "It seems that we should say that the Church, in that anthem of Offertory in Masses for the dead, means the punishments of Purgatory: she calls Purgatory Hell, because there is the same fire in both places; and she prays that the souls may be delivered from the deep pit and the mouth of the lion—that is, from the subterranean prison in which the souls of the just are expiated; and, finally, the Church prays to God that 'Tartarus may not swallow them up, and that they may not fall into the thick darkness'—that is, that they may not be longer detained in the gloomy prison, struggling in so many torments."

Bellarmine writes: "The Fathers[3] constantly teach that the pains of Purgatory are most fierce (*atrocissimas*)," and that "no pains in this life can be compared to them," and that "in a certain sense all writers admit that the pains of Purgatory are greater than those of this life."

[1] See p. 263. [2] See p. 256.

[3] This is not true, for even in the time of St. Augustine (A.D. 354–430) there was nothing more taught than the *possibility* of some Purgatory (see p. 219).

As an example of the ordinary teaching we may quote the words of Mgr. de Segur: "Purgatory is that formidable future in which we are destined to pay all that we owe to Divine justice. Purgatory presents the darkness and the desolation, the grief and the remorse of Hell. There is the same terrible fire, there are the same torments; everything is the same save despair and eternity. The same fire torments the lost souls in Hell and the penitent souls in Purgatory . . . These souls are in *outer darkness*, like the souls of the lost. They know not the time when their expiation will be ended. . . . Perhaps not for twenty years—a hundred years! perhaps not until the end of the world! . . . Terrible perhaps!"[1]

II. *As to material fire.*—St. Thomas Aquinas and almost all theologians teach that there is a corporeal, material fire, the same as that of Hell, in which the souls in Purgatory are tortured. Bellarmine says: "It is the general judgment of theologians that the fire [of Purgatory] is truly and properly such, and of the same species, with our elementary fire (*verum et proprium esse ignem, et ejusdem speciei cum nostro elementari*)." Schouppe, a modern Jesuit theologian whose *Elements of Dogmatic Theology* is much used in seminaries, writes: "As regards the pain of sense the constant opinion of the Latins is to be retained, that the fire in Purgatory is material fire (*ignem materialem*) like that in Hell." Another Jesuit writer of the present day

[1] *Familiar Instructions*, vol. i. p. 98.

expatiates with great minuteness upon the tortures of Purgatory, and condemns those who dislike pictures of the souls "to be found abroad, representing the souls in Purgatory in burning flames, under excruciating torments, which are sometimes administered by demons as the executioners of the justice of God. Such pictures," he says, "are frequently used in missions to the people,[1] or are to be found in popular books of devotion about Purgatory." Of the greatness of the pain of sense in Purgatory this writer says: "We need only say that it is clear from the language of Scripture, from reason, and from the sense of the Church, which is in full harmony with the general tone of the revelations contained in the lives of the Saints, that the pain of sense in Purgatory is something so severe and intense that we can form of it no adequate conception in this life." He goes on to say that the opinion that the fire in Purgatory is metaphorical "can hardly approve itself to a Catholic mind," and tells the story of the vision of St. Christina, "who was called back to this world after having seen the sufferings of the next, and who spent the rest of her life in the most severe penances for the relief of the holy souls. She stated that immediately on her soul leaving her body she was taken by the angels to a dark and horrible place, full of the souls of men; the torments that she

[1] This sort of thing was condemned by the Council of Trent, which forbade things "uncertain" to be taught in "popular discourses before the uneducated multitude" who form the bulk of those who attend "Missions."

there witnessed were so terrible that no tongue could express them; she saw there the souls of many she had known in this life, and was moved to intense compassion for them. She asked what the place was, thinking it must be Hell, but she was told that it was Purgatory, and that the souls whose sufferings moved her compassion so much had been sinners who had repented of their sins, but not done sufficient penance for them." Father Coleridge adds: "But, in truth, there is but one tone about all these revelations: they uniformly represent the torments of Purgatory as severe in the utmost degree."[1] We have only to remember that according to Roman theology the souls in Purgatory are all "*Holy* Souls," are at the worst only detained there for the guilt of venial sins[2]—that is, for sins so slight that they do not even need to be confessed; we have only to remember that it is these righteous souls who are tormented in this awful manner, to see how the Romish teaching contradicts the plain statements of the Bible. There we are distinctly told, in the *Wisdom of Solomon*—a book that the Roman Church holds to be canonical—that—instead of being in "a dark and horrible place," and in "torments so terrible that no tongue can express them"—"the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them." It may be

[1] *The Prisoners of the King*, p. 199.

[2] There is also the supposed "temporal punishment" due to all sin to be paid in Purgatory.

safely said that the belief in the merely penal torments of the souls of the righteous in Purgatory is not only "repugnant to the Word of God," but to the whole witness of the primitive Church, and to every instinct of justice and mercy. It is not to be wondered at that this Romish doctrine has driven men to the opposite extreme, and hindered them from realising that there is any growth in holiness possible hereafter. If the Protestant bodies have lost sight of the value of prayer for the departed, the blame must be laid at the door of the Roman Church for everywhere encouraging the unscriptural doctrine of her theologians that souls, after the guilt of their sins has been taken away, have yet to "satisfy the justice of God" by enduring torments so great that no language can describe them.

III. *Indulgences.*—The Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory is closely associated with the granting of Indulgences. The theory of Indulgences in the Church of Rome is a corruption of the belief that the Church has a right to inflict penance upon her children, and power to remit this penance either wholly or in part. In our Commination Service we are told that "In the primitive Church there was a godly discipline . . . that such persons as stood convicted of notorious sin were put to open penance, and punished in this world that their souls might be saved in the day of the Lord; and that others, admonished by their example, might be the more afraid to offend." Some-

times this penance lasted for many years, and occasionally it seemed good to the Church to abridge it, and admit the penitent to absolution. Such a remission of canonical penance was then considered to be an instance of the indulgence or tenderness of the Church towards one truly penitent, but still unabsolved and shut out from the Holy Communion. Occasionally her indulgence was shown at the petition of one who was about to undergo martyrdom, and desired, as a favour, that the Church would abridge the penance of some penitent. The Church found it difficult to refuse anything to her martyrs. The remission of penance, for whatever reason it was granted, had of course no reference to what was due to the justice of God: it was a remission of a punishment that the Church herself had inflicted. This is made clear in the writings of St. Cyprian, who is often quoted by the Romish theologians in support of their novel doctrine, whereas St. Cyprian's words tell in quite the opposite direction. The Church, he argues, may remit what she has inflicted, but, "Let no man deceive or beguile himself. The Lord only can have mercy. He alone can grant pardon for sins which against Himself have been committed, Who bare our sins, Who grieved for us, Whom God delivered for our offences. Man cannot be greater than God; it is not for the servant to yield his grace and indulgence, when the offence is mainly against the Lord; for then the lapsed will be committing a fresh crime by ignorance of that which

is afore-written, 'Cursed is he that putteth his hope in man.' . . . But if, with unseemly haste, any rash man thinks that he can give remission of sins to any, or dares to rescind the precepts of the Lord, he brings not gain to the lapsed but harm."[1] Indeed St. Cyprian was opposed to the remission of penance as tending to lessen repentance.

After the system of public penance broke down, a substitute for it was found in "penance by tariff," *i.e.* the penitent might confess to a priest, and receive a penance fixed by a tariff contained in the "penitential." If the penitent accepted the penance, he might at once be admitted to Holy Communion. This admission was only granted on the understanding that he would perform the penance for the length of time specified; it might be days, or months, or years. For certain reasons the authority who imposed the penance might grant a remittance or indulgence of all or part of it. But here again there was no idea of the indulgence being an equivalent of penance, much less a "satisfaction to the justice of God." It was the removal of penance.

The present Romish doctrine of Indulgences—founded partly upon a grievous distortion of the tenderness and indulgence which the early Church occasionally showed to those who were unabsolved and doing penance for notorious sin, and partly on penance by tariff referred to above—was not dreamed

[1] *De Laps.* 12.

of for more than twelve hundred years after Christ. It was about the thirteenth century that the Popes and theologians invented the doctrine that the old canonical penances were not only corrective and exemplary punishments inflicted by the Church, but were also "satisfactions" due to the justice of God, in payment of the debt of temporal punishment due to sin. They further asserted that all the superabundant satisfaction made to God by the merits of Jesus Christ, by the Blessed Virgin, and the saints, were placed in a treasury, over which the Pope had control. Out of this treasure the Pope could take various quantities of merit, and attach the merit to the performance of some devotional practice, or to the doing of some good work. A prayer or work of this sort was said to be "indulgenced," and whoever complied with the conditions gained the Indulgence. Hence it is now taught that one who performs a work or says a prayer that is indulgenced, say for seven years, does by that work or prayer offer to God as much satisfaction for his sins as if he had performed seven years of canonical penance under the primitive discipline of the Church. Thus Indulgences no longer refer to the remission of canonical penance, but profess to be a way of reaping the benefits of that penance. Father Hunter—a modern Jesuit writer—referring to the statement of the Council of Trent that Indulgences are salutary and useful, says that, "If their effect was merely to remit some portion of public canonical

penance, they would not be salutary, but useless, for these public penances have long been obsolete; besides which their effect would be to deprive a sinner of a comparatively easy opportunity of making satisfaction, and leave him exposed to the far greater pains of Purgatory."[1] Certainly the use of Indulgences provides an easy way of making satisfaction compared with the severe discipline of the early Church, since hundreds of days of indulgence are attached to the recitation of such exclamations as "Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation," or "Jesus, mercy! Mary, help!" and other such trifles, while fifty years' indulgence can be gained daily by anyone who cares to spend a quarter of an hour saying the Rosary or going round the Stations of the Cross.

But let us notice Father Hunter's argument in defence of Indulgences. He maintains that an Indulgence cannot now be merely a relaxation of canonical penance, since such penance is no longer imposed by the Church. This is of course quite true, and would seem an excellent reason for the ceasing of Indulgences. But the Church of Rome still grants Indulgences, and indeed she grants them in such a lavish way that none would have needed to have done canonical penance for a single day had the primitive Church acted as

[1] *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology*, S. J. HUNTER, S.J., vol. iii. p. 344. Father Hunter's argument is based on the doctrine which teaches that God requires a "quantitative satisfaction" for each sin—*after* He has pardoned the sinner. The canonical penance was done *before* absolution.

Rome now acts. What is quite clear, then, argues Father Hunter, is the fact that, since the abolition of canonical penance, Indulgences must either pay a debt due to the justice of God or be useless, since they no longer mean the remission of penalties imposed by the Church on earth. Those who gain Indulgences, then, do not suppose they are paying a debt to the discipline of the Church, but one due to the justice of God. This debt they think was formerly paid by doing canonical penance, and they rightly conclude that if it is not now paid by Indulgences the Church, having abolished canonical penance, has abolished all means of payment, except by the untold tortures of Purgatory. This we cannot suppose the Church would do, and so it follows that Indulgences are useful, since it is by them that the debt due to the justice of God is paid off.

Such is the Romish argument in support of Indulgences. As, however, the primitive Church only imposed canonical penance on those who had committed grievous and notorious sin,[1] it is difficult to

[1] Thus St. Augustine writes: "Once for all we have the washing in Baptism, every day we have the washing in Prayer. Only, do not commit those things for which ye must needs be separated from Christ's body: that be far from you! For those whom ye see doing penance (*agere pœnitentiam*) have committed heinous things . . . for these they do penance. Because if theirs had been lesser sins, daily prayer would have been sufficient to blot them out. In three ways, then, are sins remitted in the Church—by baptism, by prayer, by the greater humiliation of penance." This "greater humiliation" was, moreover, only allowed once in a lifetime. There was no obligation for over a thousand years for

see how Indulgences (which can only be gained by those who are free from any serious sin) can in any way pay any debt that was formerly paid by canonical penance. To be in any way the equivalent of canonical penance Indulgences should be limited to those who would have had to perform penance in the primitive Church. But these are just the persons who are theoretically excluded from gaining an Indulgence, while those who are able to gain Indulgences are, for the most part, pious folk who would have been exempt in primitive times from all canonical punishments.

Thus the pretence that Indulgences pay a debt to God that was formerly paid by penance is perfectly untrue. The truth is, that the primitive Church looked upon canonical penance as a disciplinary correction and an exemplary punishment of notorious sinners. She believed, as we do, that the debt due to the justice of God, if such there be, was paid by the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, and not by canonical penance which was corrective, or by Indulgences which, in the modern sense, are a fond invention.

This is also the belief of the whole Eastern Church, and is well expressed in *The Longer Catechism*, where, after speaking of the Passion of our Lord, we are told,

any to confess their secret sins to a priest, though they were allowed to do so. Those who cannot look up the subject in the Fathers generally, may consult Dr. Pusey's summary of Patristic teaching on Penance and Confession in the Oxford edition of *Tertullian*. I have given an outline of Patristic teaching in *The Crown of Christ*, vol. ii. p. 374.

"His voluntary suffering and death on the cross for us, being of infinite value and merit, as the death of one sinless, God and man in one Person, is both a perfect satisfaction to the justice of God, which had condemned us for sin to death, and a fund of infinite merit, which has obtained Him the right without prejudice to justice, to give us sinners pardon for our sins and grace to have victory over sin and death." Hence it is denied by the Orthodox Eastern Church that penances were or are satisfactions to God. Speaking of the canonical penance due to notorious sin, we are told that, "open penance . . . is with strict propriety called a *satisfaction to the Church*, which they (notorious offenders) have scandalised." The same is taught as to penance in general. The priest is told that "at the time of absolution are to be enjoined *penances* consisting of some particular good works, as prayer, fasting, alms; *not that they make satisfaction to God* for sin, for Christ 'by one offering of Himself' in sacrifice to God the Father 'hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified,' but that through the said penances we may show forth 'worthy fruits of repentance.'" This is the old faith of the Church, which the Greeks have retained, and to which we of the Anglican Church have reverted.

However, according to the Romish doctrine, a person who would have been exempt from canonical penance can by an Indulgence gain the same merit as if they had performed the old canonical penance of the Church for the number of days or years specified in the

Indulgence. The merit so gained can be used either to pay off his own debt to the justice of God, and to lessen the future time of punishment in Purgatory, or it can be applied "by way of suffrage" to some soul already undergoing torture in Purgatory. The doctrine that Indulgences are applicable to the dead is still more modern than the belief that they pay off the debts of those who gain them. Few Indulgences for the dead were heard of until the fifteenth century, but since then they have occupied the chief place in Rome's theology as to Purgatory. Thus it is now taught that if a soul in Purgatory owes a debt to God equivalent to what would have formerly required three hundred days of canonical penance for its liquidation, the debt may be paid for it by someone on earth uttering the exclamations, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, I give you my heart and my soul. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, assist me in my last agony. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you," because the Pope has seen fit to attach to these extraordinary sentences no less than three hundred days' indulgence.

Fifty years' indulgence can be gained by a priest every morning if he says a short form of "intention," given in the preparation for Mass in the Breviary.[1]

[1] In a book entitled *Instructions on the Commandments and Sacraments*, "translated from the Italian of S. Liguori," we are told (p. 292): "He who hears Mass gains an indulgence of 3,800 years," and (p. 293) "They who say five Paters and Aves in honour of the Passion of Jesus Christ and the dolours of the Virgin Mary gain an indulgence of 10,000 years"!

An element of uncertainty is, however, introduced, as the Pope candidly confesses he will not absolutely promise that God will attach full value to the Indulgences, and therefore it is never safe to stop payment; moreover, no one knows exactly how much is owing to the justice of God. This keeps up the zeal of the faithful for gaining Indulgences, and theologians magnify the debt due to God and the probable long duration of Purgatory to such an extent, that no zeal for gaining Indulgences can ever be too great or rest satisfied.

There can be no doubt that this doctrine has been the fruitful parent of great practical abuses. The sale of Indulgences was one of the chief causes of the Reformation, and was bitterly satirised by many of the Romanists themselves. Rome herself has tried to correct some of the more scandalous abuses, but the whole doctrine is corrupt and cannot be reformed. Abolition is the only cure; hence at the Reformation the Church of England abolished the whole theory on which Indulgences are made to rest. The Greek Church has never accepted the Romish doctrine, and denounces it in the strongest terms.

At the present day there is a tendency among the more ardent Romanists to lay great stress on the value of Indulgences. This may be seen in any books of popular devotion, especially those written for the less educated people, and for those who belong to pious confraternities and attend missions. Father

Coleridge, in his book, *The Prisoners of the King*, writes: "When we review all the means of aiding them [the souls in Purgatory] which God has put into our hands—prayers, masses, communions, almsdeeds, mortifications, pilgrimages, the Divine Office, the Office of the dead, or of our Blessed Lady, the holy Rosary, works of active mercy, the teaching of the Christian doctrine, the attending of funerals, and a thousand more—we can find none more powerful in themselves, if the fruit be really gained, none more honourable to God and to our Lord and to His Church, than this of holy Indulgences." He insists much on this doctrine, and reminds us that "the remission of the pain due to sins, which is the fruit of an Indulgence, can only fall on those sins the guilt of which has been already forgiven," and assures us that "the great ease with which Indulgences may now be gained is a great blessing to the faithful of our times, a great blessing to those who avail themselves of it largely and diligently, while it may turn out to be a cause of severe self-reproach to those who neglect to avail themselves of the immense benignity of the Church."

IV. *Privileged Altars.*—The traffic in Masses is still one of the chief sources of revenue in the Roman Church.

Looked at from one point of view, there is something to be said for the custom of charging a certain sum to those who desire the priest to offer the Mass for their own special intention. It is said that to do

this is merely to act on the principle that they who serve the altar are entitled to live by the altar, and that it does not matter whether a priest is paid so much a year or so much for each service he performs. This is not a fair statement of the case, since the taking of money for Masses is by no means restricted to priests who are otherwise without stipend. The wealthy Religious Orders and the more fashionable churches[1] are the chief recipients of the vast sums that are paid for the application of the fruit of the Sacrifice to particular and private objects. We find, therefore, that a great deal of exhortation is given to the laity to stir them up to obtain Masses for themselves and others and the souls in Purgatory. Now, there is no question that the primitive Church taught that the Eucharist was rightly offered for the departed, but it was then supposed that the Church made this offering for all the faithful—living and departed—whenever the Sacrifice was offered. Those who desired to pray for some special intention did so at the time when the Eucharist was being celebrated, and no doubt the priest was asked to pray for the same object. But there was no custom of multiplying Eucharists and repeating the Sacrifice frequently for private intentions. There was but one Eucharist in

[1] At Lourdes and other places of pilgrimage there are regular box-offices for booking and paying for masses; so numerous are the orders that large ledgers are needed for their entry, and in spite of the large staff of priests all masses are often booked for a month ahead.

a church on the same day, and the Sacrifice was not always offered daily. Now all this is changed in the Roman Church, but not in the Eastern. Thirty Masses for one departed are the least, it is said, that should be ordered by a well-to-do person, and as each Mass (in England) costs five shillings, it is clear that if the laity act on this advice the sums received for Masses for the dead must be very large. As a matter of fact the wealthy Roman Catholics would not think of limiting their order for Masses to this small number, and the more generous are accustomed to send much larger sums than those fixed by authority.[1]

Father Coleridge writes: "The custom of thirty Masses still remains, and it would be well if this holy devotion were revived among us, as far as is possible, at least, as to the number of Masses which those who are able should procure for their own relatives and friends. A kindred question to this would be another, whether it is better to found anniversary Masses[2] for the dead for perpetuity, or to procure a great number of Masses to be said at once." The balance seems to turn in favour of the anniversary Masses, as they "enhance the splendour of the Church by supporting her ministers, and the like. In the last place," continues the same writer, "it is well that we should remember the custom which prevails among the faithful in many countries

[1] Queen Christina of Spain, a few years ago, left money for 10,000 Masses for herself and her husband.

[2] See reference to the scapular and Purgatory, p. 322.

of having Masses celebrated . . . for their own souls, the satisfaction of which Masses is to be applied to their deliverance when they come to Purgatory." All this advice is, it would seem, due to a forgetfulness of the promises made by our Lady to Simon Stock, that she would liberate anyone from Purgatory on the Saturday after their death if they only would take the trouble to wear her scapular!

We come now to the special efficacy of Masses for the departed celebrated at what is called a "Privileged Altar." Such an altar is one to which the Pope has attached "a plenary indulgence for one soul in Purgatory to all Masses said at it for the dead."[1] The effect of a plenary Indulgence, if accepted by God at its full value, would be the liberation of a soul from Purgatory. Hence Father Coleridge says, "It must be clear that a Mass celebrated at a privileged altar is more directly and powerfully beneficial to a soul in Purgatory than another. . . ."

The following description is given by the Abbé Thiers[2] of the origin and uses of privileged altars: "The first notion apparently came from some mendicant monk, who, judging that this devotion could not be indifferent to his convent, solicited its establishment, or caused it to be solicited, at Rome. . . . He there procured a Brief for a privileged altar, for which he obtained the approbation of his Ordinary, who was

[1] *A Catholic Dictionary*, p. 695 (second edition).
[2] *Traité des Superstitions.*

perhaps an accommodating and obliging person. He then caused it to be printed, posted up, and published everywhere; had tablets made, with the inscription, PRIVILEGED ALTAR, in large letters; set them above the altar designed for Indulgences, on the doors of his church, and over the principal door of his convent; caused the bells to ring and chime in an extraordinary manner; sent notes to every house; confessors invited devotees to the ceremony; the Offices were solemnly performed, the church magnificently adorned, and the privileged altar above all; the Indulgences were proclaimed; the people came in crowds to gain them, confessed, communicated, *and asked for Masses at the privileged altar;* the monks who had previously been poor had something to spare; the community was augmented to dispose of this; in a word, they derived benefit from this new invention.

"Nothing more was requisite to excite the jealousy of other mendicants. . . . From the churches of the mendicant monks they passed to those of the other Regulars, thence to some of the estated monks, to parishes, to Collegiate and even to Cathedral churches. It was perceived that they brought Masses to the mendicants, and that the payments for these Masses were a great assistance in supporting communities. Other monks judged that this was a method not to be neglected; they, like the mendicants, set up titles of privileged altars; some even went beyond these titles, and added, "HERE A SOUL IS DELIVERED FROM

PURGATORY AT EVERY MASS"; and others, while Mass was said at their privileged altars (especially from the consecration to the end of the communion), let off *small fireworks* in the background, in order to mark that at this moment a soul went out of Purgatory straight into Heaven! This I have seen practised in a celebrated church, and all Paris might have seen it as well as I.

"As there are always some monks in a monastery, some priests in parishes . . . who have a little more skill than others . . . how to dress altars . . . they are usually charged with the Sacristy, the Registry, and the Mass account; and in order to deserve well of their communities . . . one of their first cares is to have a chapel to some new saint, a new relic or some extraordinary image, but particularly a privileged altar, in order to make Masses come to the Sacristy, under pretext of gaining indulgences and delivering souls from Purgatory. . . . This is the utility of privileged altars."

V. *Fables.*—Another aspect of the Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory is that brought into prominence by the innumerable pious fables—that are told as if they were perfectly true—of the power of the Blessed Virgin over Purgatory. Father Coleridge merely represents the common teaching of his Church when he extols "the doctrine which attributes to our Blessed Lady a peculiar prerogative, as well as a special care in regard of Purgatory and its prisoners." We are told that the "lives of the saints in the chronicles of the religious orders are full of anecdotes and revelations

which all tend to the same conclusion, that our Lady is constantly exercising her power in favour of these Holy Souls." A few of these legends have resulted in forms of devotion to which enormous Indulgences have been granted by the Popes. Unfortunately, it is just those the Popes have most highly indulgenced that have been shown (not by Protestants, but by learned and candid Roman Catholic historians) to be based entirely upon forgeries and deception. The most popular of these devotions after the holy Rosary is that known as the "brown scapular." The story goes that the Blessed Virgin appeared to St. Simon Stock, founder of the Carmelite Order of Monks, and handed to him a scapular (*i.e.* a piece of cloth worn over the breast and back), with the promise, "No one dying in this scapular will suffer eternal burning." This was interpreted to mean that any person who wore any scapular sanctioned by the Carmelites was secure from eternal damnation—a pleasant and easy way of attaining to Paradise! This, however, was not enough, and so the holy Virgin appeared about a century later to Pope John XXIII. and promised that "If any one of them (who wore her scapular) went to Purgatory, she herself would descend and free them on the Saturday following their death."

It may seem strange that such an absurd story, attributing such immoral promises to the Blessed Virgin, should have ever been listened to, even in an uncritical and superstitious age. What, however, is really amazing is that the legend is still taught and

the use of the scapular is in the present day among the most popular and commonly practised forms of Roman Catholic devotion. It appears to matter little that the legend had its origin in imposture and forgery, and has been proved by learned Roman Catholic historians[1] to be absolutely without any reasonable foundation. It is still preached and still proclaimed as a glory of the Carmelite Order. Just consider what the promises which are attributed to the Blessed Virgin amount to. If they mean anything, they mean that the whole scheme of salvation, as made known in the Gospel, is superseded by the wearing of two strings and two scraps of cloth, which have been bestowed on someone under the sanction of the Carmelites as the equivalent of their scapular. Let a man live as he will, and sin wilfully up to the last, he cannot be lost if he wear this scapular, for the Blessed Virgin is pledged to obtain his salvation, and not only that, but she has also engaged herself to procure his liberation from Purgatory and admission to the Beatific Vision within a few days after death at the longest. No doubt this sounds an exaggeration, but it is not, and if anyone cares to assure himself that it is not he can do so by referring to a correspondence that took place between Father Ryder, of the Oratory, and Father Clarke, of the Society of Jesus, in *The Tablet* newspaper during November and December, 1886. Father Ryder wished to explain away the

[1] See the article on the *Scapular* in *A Catholic Dictionary*, by W. E. Addis and Thomas Arnold.

promise of the Blessed Virgin as meaning that only those who died in a state of grace would be saved. Father Clarke allowed that none who died in mortal sin could be saved, but vigorously maintained that the promise meant that none who wore the scapular could die in mortal sin, since the Blessed Virgin would at the moment of death obtain for them the grace of contrition. The only condition that Father Clarke made to the promise was that the scapular should be worn "out of devotion to Mary." He does not assert that anyone who—when unconscious, for example—was invested with a scapular and died in it would be able to claim the fulfilment of the promise. Father Clarke says that if our Lady merely meant that those who die in a state of grace would be saved, St. Simon Stock might well have replied to her, "Thank you for nothing at all. Everyone who dies in grace is secure of salvation. Your promise, therefore, is worth nothing, and your scapular a mere superfluous decoration." Father Clarke continues: "I take it that the original promise meant that everyone that shall, of his own free will and out of devotion to Mary, wear the scapular at the hour of death shall obtain the grace of contrition at the last. . . . I am not at one with him (*i.e.* Father Ryder) if he asserts that he who wears the scapular out of devotion to our Lady can possibly lose his soul. In this sense I most certainly regard the scapular as a *sacramentum æternæ salutis.* If to believe this be superstitious, I willingly accept the name."

If the Roman Church really believes that our Lady made this promise, one would think that she would insist on everyone wearing the scapular, since that would be an easy way of securing the salvation of the world. Only by some miracle, such as the breaking of the strings of the scapular at the critical moment, could anyone then be lost. The use of the scapular would relieve men of the need of the Sacraments, and of all trouble as to the ten commandments. A little devotion to Mary, such as is not uncommonly found among the brigands of Sicily, would be all that anyone need trouble about as far as eternal salvation is concerned. Nor need there be any further trouble or thought for the souls in Purgatory, since all who die wearing the scapular are promised deliverance from Purgatory on the Saturday after their death. But how does this accord with the anniversary Masses, and the thirty Masses on consecutive days after a death?

There are other ways in which the Blessed Virgin exercises her control over the nether world. According to approved stories she descends into Purgatory on certain of her Festivals and takes out whom she will, the preference being shown to those who were devout to her when they were on earth. It does not seem to strike the people who circulate these legends that they represent our Lady in an odious light. They imply that she is flattered by little attentions, which she rewards by deliverance from Purgatory, while those who have neglected to show

devotion to her are abandoned to the flames. If the Blessed Virgin can help souls in the next world, we have no sort of doubt that she will do so on other occasions than her own Feasts, and will have some consideration for those who loved and obeyed her Son as well as for those who showed devotion to herself.

We have now briefly touched upon the Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory, and distinguished it from the Roman dogmatic decisions put forth at the Councils of Florence and Trent. The dogmatic decrees may need a certain amount of explanation before they could be accepted by the Eastern and Anglican communions, but the Romish doctrine cannot be explained or harmonised with the faith of the Gospel, or the belief of the whole Church for more than a thousand years. It is well described by the words of our Article as "a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God."[1]

[1] Cardinal Vaughan, when Bishop of Salford, published among his "penny books for the people" one called *The Meaning and Use of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel;* in this he earnestly persuades the people to join the confraternity. He says (p. 4) the scapular is a "purely voluntary devotion, resting on a pious belief," the reasonable evidence for which has been fully attested. As a matter of fact the *Catholic Dictionary* proves that it rests on imposture only. Cardinal Vaughan says: "No confraternity has ever received a greater number of approbations from the Sovereign Pontiffs than this of the scapular. Nineteen popes have confirmed and approved it by publishing some forty Bulls and Rescripts in its favour." On page 19 we are told that plenary indulgences can be gained seventy-six times each year, while partial indulgences for seven, five, and three years are to be had for next to nothing in the way of "devotion." It is hardly to be wondered at, after the exposure of the scapular by learned Romanists, that some "Liberal Catholics" doubt the wisdom of the guidance given them by the Popes.

XVI.

Anglican Teaching

"What has been said of mediæval authority is at least as true of the authority of the Reformation theology, and of the special type of Reformation theology which was characteristic of the English Church. It cannot be taken by itself as constituting our standard or court of appeal."--*The Body of Christ.* Dr. GORE.

XVI.

Anglican Teaching

THE appeal of the Church of England when she reformed herself in the fifteenth century was to Holy Scripture interpreted by the primitive Church. In her Article VI. she maintains: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." Some mediæval doctrines she rejects because they are "grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God." She asserts that the Church may not "ordain anything contrary to God's Word written," or, "so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another." And again, as the Church "ought not to decree anything against the same, so beside the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation." The Book of Common Prayer as it first stood (in 1549 and 1552) is defended on the ground that it did not "contain in it anything contrary to the Word of

God, or to sound doctrine," and in the Canon addressed to preachers, issued by the Bishops in the Convocation of 1571, which first imposed on the clergy subscription to the Articles, we are told : "Before all else they shall see to it that they never teach anything in a sermon which they wish to be religiously held and believed by the people, except what is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and what the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops collected out of that very doctrine." Once more, at the solemn moment of their ordination all priests are obliged to confess that they are persuaded that the holy Scriptures "contain sufficiently all doctrine required of necessity for eternal salvation through faith in Christ Jesus," and that they are "determined out of the said holy Scriptures to instruct the people, and to teach or maintain nothing as required of necessity to eternal salvation but that which they are persuaded may be concluded and proved by the Scriptures." We notice the careful and repeated limitation, "as required of necessity to eternal salvation," words that permit some opinions to be put forward as such, if they be not insisted upon as part of the faith of Christ. The appeal to Holy Scripture does not, of course, mean that every man is free to reject the common consent of the Church as to its interpretation, for the Church of England in her Canons of 1603 has expressly declared that, "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm, That the form of God's worship in the Church of England,

established by law, and contained in the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, is a corrupt, superstitious, or unlawful worship of God, or containeth anything in it that is repugnant to the Scriptures; let him be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored but by the Bishop of the place, or Archbishop, after his repentance and public revocation of such his wicked errors."[1] Hence, in Article XX. it is said that the Church is "a witness and keeper of Holy Writ," and in Article XXXIV., that, "Whosoever through his private judgment doth openly break the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like), as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church. . . ." Once more the authority of the primitive Church is referred to when it is said that, "It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understanded of the people."[2]

The idea in these and many other passages is evidently that, while the Church ought not to require anything that is repugnant to Holy Writ to be believed as necessary to salvation, each man should submit himself to the order, teaching, and discipline of the

[1] Canon iv. [2] Art. xxiv.

portion of the Church in which he lives.[1] Otherwise every separate man would be constituted a critic, and there would be an end to all common belief and action, since doctrines that appear to most men to be plainly taught in God's Word are denied by other men to be in accord with the divine Scriptures. Thus the whole Church out of the Scriptures has gathered the necessity of the Sacraments—where they may be had; but the Sacraments are rejected by the Quakers and other sects as repugnant to the Word of God. The responsibility therefore rests with the Church, and though one portion of the Church believes another portion to go beyond and teach contrary to God's Word, yet must each man submit his judgment to that portion whereunto he belongeth.

That the position taken up by the Church of England towards Holy Scripture is the same as that which was adopted by the primitive Church, is easily shown from the writings of the great Fathers. Dr. Pusey's words may well be borne in mind, that it is no "undue limitation of the authority of the Church to lay down another limit, that the Church may not require 'as necessary to salvation' what is not read in Holy Scripture or may be proved by it. This only implies the historical fact that the same body of saving truths which the Apostles first preached orally, they afterwards, under the inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, wrote in the holy Scriptures,

[1] In the Church of England we are referred to the primitive Church, not to the writings of "the Reformers."

God ordering in His providence that, in the unsystematic teaching of Holy Scripture, all should be embodied which is essential to establish the faith. This is said over and over again by the Fathers. This limitation of the power of the Church does not set individuals free to criticise, on their private judgments, what the whole Church has decided." It may be superfluous to say the Church must not contradict or add to the Faith, for we know that she will, *as a whole*, never do so, since she is "the pillar and ground of the truth";[1] but by the Church we often mean a portion of the Church, and the Church of England certainly supposes that the Church of Rome teaches things to be a part of the faith, and thus essential to salvation, which formed no part of the original deposit. Among such doctrines are, for example, the dogma of the Infallibility of the Bishop of Rome, and the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, both of which we hold to be not only not contained in Holy Writ, but rather to be repugnant to that which is therein contained.

In applying what has been said to the doctrine concerning the intermediate state, we find that the Church of England rejected at the Reformation some points of belief that she had until then held in common with the rest of the Western Church, and that she was guided in what she rejected as well as in what she retained by this principle of appeal to Holy Scripture as interpreted by the Fathers of the primitive Church.

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 15.

The plain teaching in Holy Scripture as to the intermediate state is but scanty. What there is cannot be reconciled with the Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory. St. Thomas Aquinas confesses that Scripture determines nothing as to the whereabouts of Purgatory, and he might also have said Scripture is equally silent as to the Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory, which teaches that the souls of the righteous are tormented in the next world in order to appease the wrath of God and to pay a debt to His justice. The few undoubted references in Holy Writ to the life of the righteous after death are suggestive of peace and rest, while of those who are not spoken of as righteous, but for whom there may be hope of final salvation, little or nothing is clearly revealed, and our hope can only be based on what we believe to be the revealed general principles that regulate God's dealings with sinners who have not wholly and finally rejected His grace.

We have already dealt with some of the plain statements of God's written Word, and we have seen what the primitive Church gathered from them as to the intermediate state. If she knew nothing of a Purgatory of torment for the righteous, neither did she know anything of a state after death that rendered prayer for the departed useless. Her confident belief was that those who had striven to love and serve God here on earth were after death speedily, if not at once, admitted into the joy of their Lord. They were thought of as they who "rest from their labours," who

are "in peace" and "with Christ." Of such it had been said, "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction, but they are in peace."[1]

For those who had lived carelessly and died with but few signs of conversion to God, or who had not been able to prove the reality of their conversion by bringing forth worthy fruits of penance, the primitive Church did not forbid men to entertain a hope that in the great and terrible day of judgment, if not before, such might find mercy and be saved, yet "so as by fire."[2] Where such souls were detained and perfected the primitive Church knew not. As they were not with Christ in Heaven—where alone Christ is in His Humanity—then they were necessarily "outside the Palace." It might be that the door of opportunity would not be found shut against any until the end—until the close of the mediatorial kingdom of Jesus Christ, until time had ceased and eternity begun. Meanwhile such souls, in so great peril, were to be the object of the fervent prayers of the Church.

On the whole, then, the primitive Church associated the thought of the faithful departed—those who, after serving God here, had died "in the Lord"—with the light, joy, peace, and rest of the Paradise of God.[3] Thither she turned her gaze, and towards that heavenly

[1] Wisdom iii. 1–3. [2] 1 Cor. iii. 15. [3] pp. 182–4.

country she taught her children to hasten. For the spirits of these just ones made perfect she did not, however, hesitate to pray, that they might have an increase of what they already essentially possessed, and a joyful resurrection.[1]

We have now to consider how far this primitive faith and hope is expressed in the teaching and formularies of the Anglican communion, and what may lawfully be held by those who are neither Greek Catholics nor Roman Catholics, but English Catholics.

We must at the outset remember that the present teaching of the Church of England is a departure from what she once held in the middle ages, and claims to be a return to the faith of the Gospel as understood and taught in the purest ages of the undivided Church. We have therefore to notice what she has rejected as well as what she has retained. At the root of the Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory is the belief in the temporal punishment due to sin—a temporal punishment which is not merely the evil consequences of sin that often have to be endured in this life by the penitent, and may follow him into the next world, but a temporal punishment exacted by the justice of God as a debt due to Himself, and which, if not paid off here on earth, must be paid by

[1] As it is often argued that because the primitive Church prayed for the departed she must have thought they were in torment, we may remember that some theologians teach that the "accidental glory" of those in Heaven is increased, and "fresh joy" granted to them, through the suffrages of those on earth.

enduring tortures in Purgatory. Every mortal sin carries with it—according to Roman theology—two consequences, pain and guilt. When the sinner is penitent and absolved, the guilt and its eternal punishment are remitted, but a temporal punishment is said to be still due to the justice of God. In the case of venial sin the guilt is much less than that attaching to mortal sin; it does not destroy the grace of God in the soul, and carries with it no eternal punishment, but only a temporal punishment.[1] Supposing, therefore, that a man dies truly penitent and in the love of God, there yet remains to be done away any guilt of venial sin not already removed, and all the debt of temporal punishment due to God's justice for mortal and venial sin which has not been paid off here on earth. In Purgatory the soul cannot merit, and therefore it can only pay this debt by suffering tortures. These tortures are *satisfactions* to the justice of God, and pay off the debt. The debt is also able to be paid off by those on earth who gain indulgences and offer prayers and Masses for the souls in Purgatory. According to this Romish doctrine, a soul perfectly holy and free from all stains and guilt, and thus ready for Heaven, may have to endure fearful torments in Purgatory for centuries, simply because the debt of temporal punishment is not paid to God.[2]

Now this doctrine, that our sufferings here or here-

[1] *Summa Theo.* 1–2. lxxxvii. v., and pars. iii, lxxxvi. iv.

[2] See note p. 348.

after are in themselves a satisfaction to the justice of God, is one of the doctrines most emphatically rejected by the Anglican communion. It is true that the Fathers often speak of "satisfying God," and of works of "satisfaction," especially prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, but it is abundantly clear that they meant simply that by these works men prove their repentance to be real, and so satisfy the demand which God makes of repentance as a condition of the pardon of sin. As Hooker says: "Repentance is a name which noteth the habit and operation of a certain grace or virtue in us; Satisfaction, the effect which it hath, either with God or man."[1] Satisfaction in this true and scriptural sense is the voluntary bringing forth of the "fruits of repentance,' and by no means the involuntary bearing of tortures by those who are not only truly penitent, but wholly sanctified. As St. Augustine says: "What God hath covered He will not observe, and what He observeth not He will not punish." That there is a varying degree of guilt and punishment attaching to all sin the Church quite allows, but what she asserts is that the remission of this pain, in so far as it is a debt due to the justice of God, and the remission of the guilt, have been purchased once for all by the infinite merits of Jesus Christ. He alone, as being God and Man, could pay a debt due from man to God.

Hooker well says: "God, how highly soever displeased and incensed with our sins, is notwithstanding,

[1] *Eccles. Polity*, Book vi. sect. 5.

for His sake (Jesus Christ's), by our tears pacified, taking that for satisfaction which is due by us, because Christ has by His Satisfaction made it acceptable."[1] This is the principle insisted upon in Article XXXI., which asserts that: "The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and *satisfaction*, for *all* the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and *there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone.* Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, *to have remission of pain or guilt*, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits."[2] It is true that the Article also condemns a once prevalent belief that our Lord died to satisfy only for original sin, and left the Mass to satisfy for the actual sins of men, but the main protest is against the idea that the Mass is any *other* satisfaction than that which was once offered on Calvary. It is then untrue that torments endured here or hereafter are in themselves satisfactions made to the "justice of God," but it is exactly on this belief that the Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory is built.

The difficulty as to how the souls in Purgatory can be said to make satisfaction when they are no longer

[1] *Eccles. Polity*, Book vi. sect. 5.

[2] The learned Roman Catholic theologian known as Sancta Clara, in his comments on this Article, says: "The commencement, so far as it is affirmative, is indubitably true—*indubitata est*," and shows that the latter part is aimed at a popular opinion and that "nothing is said against *the Mass itself—nihil agitur contra Sacrificia Missa in se.*"

able to merit has led the Romish theologians to teach that these souls do not, strictly speaking, satisfy God by what they *do*, but they satisfy by what they suffer. Schouppe writes that "Purgatory is a place in which the souls of the faithful, liable for temporal punishment, 'satisfy by suffering' (*satispatiuntur*). It is said 'satisfy by suffering' because these souls are no longer wayfarers here on earth, and as they cannot merit, so neither can they, properly speaking, satisfy *for* their debt of punishment; but they satisfy *in* punishment, and pay off the penalty due, in this way, that except by suffering what is sufficient they cannot help themselves or be freed from punishment."

Now it was more especially to pay a debt we could not pay, and to save us from its penalty, that our Lord offered His Passion for us. He did not take away the need of our repentance, but from the penitent who has passed into the other world He surely requires no payment to be made to His justice by the endurance of merely penal tortures? The belief in the absolute efficacy of the Cross is so important that the Church of England insists upon it each time the Eucharist is celebrated, when, in the prayer of Consecration, she asserts that Jesus Christ on the Cross "made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and *satisfaction* for the sins of the whole world." That some sins do bring a visible and temporal punishment with them none, of course,

deny. God does not interfere to hinder this punishment from overtaking even those who are truly penitent. The ruined health of one who has been intemperate is a temporal punishment—not arbitrarily inflicted, but not miraculously hindered—that pursues even the truly repentant sinner. The loss of character, the pain of seeing others suffer through one's own sins and follies, all these and other temporal penalties are allowed by God for the warning of others and the hindrance of further relapse. But such temporal punishments are not, strictly speaking, satisfactions to God, nor do they pay any debt due from the sinner to Him. In the supernatural order, all such pains and debts have been paid by the Sinless Redeemer, Who was "wounded for our transgressions," and "bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." On Him the Lord hath laid "the iniquity of us all."[1] That works of penance are not undervalued by the Church of England may be plainly seen from the Commination Service, where she praises the "godly discipline" of the primitive Church, and says that its restoration is "much to be wished"—from her observance of vigils, fasts and days of abstinence, the inculcation of almsgiving, and the like. But all such fruits of penitence are to teach us to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, or to subdue the flesh to the spirit, or to enable us to correct or amend our life so that our "faith may

[1] Isa. liii. 5, 6.

be found in the day of the Lord laudable, glorious, and honourable, to the increase of glory and endless felicity." Afflictions that are supposed to be sent directly from God, rather than to result from our own and other people's evil-doing, are to be looked upon as sent or permitted for our correction; we are urged to bear "patiently, and with thanksgiving our heavenly Father's correction, whensoever by any manner of adversity it shall please His gracious goodness to visit us." The exhortation in the Visitation of the Sick gives the true attitude of the Christian towards involuntary suffering. It tells us that "there should be no greater comfort to Christian persons, than to be made like unto Christ, by suffering patiently adversities, troubles, and sicknesses. For He Himself went not up to joy, but first He suffered pain; He entered not into His glory before He was crucified. So truly our way to eternal joy is to suffer here with Christ; and our door to enter into eternal life is gladly to die with Christ; that we may rise again from death, and dwell with Him in everlasting life." In Holy Scripture we read sometimes that God afflicts—or allows affliction to fall on—His people for some good purpose, but never with the object of enabling them to "satisfy His justice" by enduring punishments that are neither corrective, remedial, nor exemplary. The Church of England has therefore rejected the doctrine that the justice of God demands for every forgiven sin an arbitrary, quantitative, temporal punishment, which must

be paid either here or hereafter by suffering pain. She teaches that whatever satisfaction was due to the justice of God has been paid by Jesus Christ. Hooker's words are well worth quoting: "They [*i.e.* Romish theologians] imagine, beyond all conceit of antiquity, that when God doth remit sin and the punishment eternal thereunto belonging, He reserveth the torments of hell-fire to be nevertheless endured for a time, either shorter or longer, according to the quantity of men's crimes. . . . If a penitent depart this life, the debt of satisfaction being either in whole or in part undischarged, they steadfastly hold that the soul must remain in unspeakable torments till all be paid; therefore, for help and mitigation in this case they advise men to set certain copesmates on work, *whose prayers and sacrifices may satisfy God for such souls as depart in debt.* Hence have arisen the infinite pensions of their priests, the building of so many altars and tombs . . ." Speaking of the Romish theory of a "treasury of merit," he says, "By this postern-gate cometh in the whole merit of Papal indulgences; a gain inestimable unto him, to others a spoil, a scorn both to God and man."

We have now to consider what is clearly taught by the Anglican formularies (1) as to the state of the perfected souls of the righteous, then (2) as to the imperfect, and lastly (3) as to suffrages for the departed.

(1) The Church of England does not, any more than the Eastern or Roman Churches, take upon herself

to decide in any individual case what is the condition of the soul at the moment of death. She has for some an almost certain confidence that they have died in the grace of God, and are far advanced in the way of holiness. All she can definitely assert is that if—and God alone knows—a soul passes out of this world free from all stain of sin and perfectly conformed to the likeness of Christ, then such a soul is admitted into Heaven. In both the Order for the Burial of the Dead, and in the Visitation of the Sick, the Church addresses Almighty God as He "with Whom do live the spirits of just men made perfect, after they are delivered from their earthly prisons"; she prays that the soul may be received "into those heavenly habitations, where the souls of them that sleep in the Lord Jesus enjoy perpetual rest and felicity"; and again, for a sick person she asks of God that "after *his* departure hence in peace, and in Thy favour, *his* soul may be received into Thine everlasting kingdom." For these souls already in "joy and felicity," the Church prays that they may have their "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory." From this it is perfectly clear that the Church of England agrees with the Eastern and Roman communions as to the state of the "spirits of just men made perfect" before the resurrection. They are with Christ, and await only the further increase of glory which the perfected spirit receives when it is "clothed upon" with the glorified and spiritual body

in the resurrection. The spirit is perfect from the moment it enters Heaven, but the spirit must be clothed with the body before the whole man attains the end for which he was created. For this teaching we have the most certain warrants in God's Word.

(2) As to the condition of those who have departed capable of salvation and yet by no means perfect, the Church of England has little, if anything, to tell us. However unsatisfying this may be to our curiosity, it must be confessed that Holy Scripture tells us but little, and the Church can, therefore, hardly tell us more. There are, however, certain clear principles laid down in the holy Scriptures which seem to regulate God's dealings with penitent sinners. He receives all who return to Him, and fully and freely forgives them the guilt of their sin; He inflicts no vindictive pains upon those He has thus welcomed, but He does not miraculously eradicate all the effects of long-continued evil habits, or impart in a moment the full beauty of holiness; the abundant and manifold fruit of the Spirit is usually the reward of long-continued cultivation of the garden of the soul.

In this life perfection is not attained suddenly; a man must learn to bring forth fruit with patience, by conflict with temptation, and by striving to follow the example of Christ and conform the soul to His likeness. Now all this, if not done perfectly at the moment of death, must be accomplished after the soul has left the body or not at all. If it were never perfected, then the

soul could never enter Heaven, since none who are not Christlike can attain their reward, which is to be "with Christ." Most assuredly God will not quench the smoking flax; rather, as the Apostle says, "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."[1] By "the day of Jesus Christ," or "the day of the Lord," is always meant the day of final judgment.

(3) With this need of the soul in mind the Church of England commits the departing soul to God, and prays that He will perfect it. She does not dogmatise, but prays that the soul may be precious in God's sight; that He will "wash it in the blood of that Immaculate Lamb that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh, or the wiles of Satan, *being purged and done away*, it may be presented pure and without spot before" God. The idea is that the soul which was once made perfect in Baptism, may—now that it is passing from the body—be cleansed from all defilement and restored to the state from whence it has fallen, and so once again be made fit for the kingdom of heaven. But whether this restoration is accomplished in a moment, or whether it is done—as usually here on earth—slowly and by degrees, we are not told. Of this the Church of Rome

[1] Phil. i. 6.

can know no more than the Church of England; to decide the question dogmatically would be to be wise above what is written. There is room, however, for either belief, since both the Scriptures and the Fathers occasionally speak as if to depart hence in the Lord is at once to pass to His presence and His joy, and at other times as if the completion of the good work of sanctification might be long delayed and not completed "until the day of Jesus Christ." Too much stress must not be laid upon this last expression, as if it necessarily determined the lot of the disembodied spirit; it is possible that St. Paul had in mind the completion of the redemption of the whole man, and that is not accomplished in any case until the resurrection of the body. The opinion that the soul is perfected in an instant at death has been thought possible by some saints and theologians. St. Macarius certainly held this opinion, and there are more modern Western theologians who have taught "that souls after death are cleansed from the stain of their venial sin by turning with fervent love to God, and by detestation of those offences which marred, though they did not entirely destroy, their union with Him." St. Thomas and Suarez, for instance, hold that "this act of fervent love and perfect sorrow is made in the first instant of the soul's separation from the body, and suffices of itself to remove all stain of sin." Hence, except for what they call the temporal punishment due to the justice of God, some even of the

Romish theologians would allow there is no essential need of Purgatory.[1]

We have seen that the idea of temporal punishment, due after this life as a debt to the justice of God, is without any scriptural justification, so that even if the Anglican Church did plainly teach that the soul is perfected instantly at death there would be nothing in the doctrine at variance with Holy Scripture or the teaching of the primitive Church. The Roman theologians themselves do not teach that the temporal punishment perfects or improves the souls in Purgatory; it is merely a debt for which they are detained, and a debt which can only be paid off by suffering.

From the language of the Book of Common Prayer, and from the statement in the *Homilies* that "the Scripture doth acknowledge but two places after this life—the one proper to the elect and blessed of God, and the other to the reprobate and damned souls," followed by the exhortation, "Let us think that the

[1] Dr. MORTIMER, in his *Catholic Faith and Practice*, has given the following summary of the doctrine of the Roman theologians. He says they teach that "the remains or stains of sin which are removed in Purgatory have been thought to be of three kinds. First: venial sins which have not been remitted in this life, and these, according to St. Thomas and Suarez, are completely removed by a perfect act of love and contrition, made in the first moment *after* death. Second: evil habits which are likewise expelled immediately after death by acts of the opposite virtues. Third: temporal punishment, which cannot be removed by meriting, or satisfying the justice of God, since the time of merit has now passed; but by endurance, or by the suffrages of the faithful on earth." One sees from this how *useless* a torment is that supposed to be inflicted in Purgatory, and consequently how the *Romish* doctrine concerning Purgatory is a "fond thing," etc.

soul of man passing out of the body goeth straightway either to heaven or hell"[1]—it seems most probable that the compilers of our Prayer-book held that the souls of the departed were perfected in an instant at death. How very near to this belief the more learned Roman theologians have come we have already seen, but the point is often overlooked. Dr. Pusey said in his *Eirenicon*[2] that, "the ordinary belief in England must be, that God, in one act, at the particular judgment, at once frees the soul which dies in His grace from all sinfulness which clung to it while yet in the body, and fits it for its abode in Paradise." What is this "ordinary belief" but that held by the Roman theologians already quoted, that the guilt of venial sin is removed and evil habits are done away in the first moment after death? The fact is that the popular Roman doctrine has entirely changed, and the very name of "Purgatory" is now not a suitable one to express the modern Roman teaching that souls are not *purged* or purified in Purgatory, but merely punished. It is true that some theologians still teach the older belief, but modern Roman theology tends to make Purgatory merely a torture-chamber for paying off a debt. A modern writer says: "In one respect, however, some Doctors, since the Tridentine Council, have entirely altered their minds. We have seen that the Mass was offered for those who were 'not *as yet fully purged*.' Hence the propriety of the term

[1] On Prayer, xix. part 3. [2] p. 192 (1865).

Purgatory. But since the time of Bellarmine it is commonly believed that souls become neither better nor worse in Purgatory; they are perfect in love and ready for Heaven. All that remains is to pay the debt due for their sins." [1]

It would seem that some of the Roman formularies teach exactly the same belief as the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. In the Roman Commendatory Office—one of great beauty—the priest prays for the departing soul in these words: "Come, ye Saints of God, hasten, ye Angels of the Lord, receive his soul, presenting it in the sight of the most High. May Christ receive thee, Who called thee, and lead thee to the Bosom of Abraham," and then in words very similar to our own Commendatory Prayer: "O Lord, we commend to Thee the soul of Thy servant N., that, dead to the world, he may live to Thee, and whatever sins he has committed in this life through human frailty, do Thou in Thy most merciful goodness forgive." Our own prayer is perhaps more in accord with the ancient teaching, since it prays that the soul may be "purged." In another part of the Commendation of the Soul the Roman Church petitions: "Mayest thou be a stranger to all that is punished with darkness, chastised with flames, and condemned to torments, and do Thou, O most merciful Lord Jesus . . . have mercy on the soul of Thy servant, and vouchsafe to introduce him into the

[1] Purgatory, in *Tracts for the Day*, p. 24 (1868).

ever verdant and delicious places of Paradise. . . ." Certainly no one would dream from the Commendatory Office that the Roman Church thought that all souls—except perhaps a few of the greatest saints—passed into the blackness of darkness and torments as great as those of Hell. Her liturgical prayers are for the most part entirely inconsistent with her popular and ordinary teaching.

The Church of England, then, seems to imply the instantaneous perfecting of the soul, but she nowhere lays down this doctrine explicitly, and we have perfect liberty to think that God perfects, and cleanses, and educates the souls in the intermediate state more gradually, and more after the way in which He acts while the soul is still here on earth united with the body. This more tardy education of the soul seems to accord better also with the idea we have of the justice of God. It seems fitting—we do not dare to dogmatise or say, It *is* fitting—that if two men have passed away, the one after a long life of service of God, the other after a long life of sin, with only a late repentance, there should be for the one a more speedy, and for the other a slower entry into Heaven. The ingrained evil habits may perhaps be only slowly eradicated, and there may be great suffering to be borne in the process. The suffering would not be arbitrary, nor in any sense a torture inflicted to atone to the justice of God, but would be some such sorrow and grief as comes from the knowledge of sin and

the ingratitude of a life of sin. The Prodigal Son was fully and entirely pardoned, no temporal punishment was inflicted on him by his father, but surely he must have felt a bitter regret and shame—that was a real pain—at the thought of his past life; this sorrow would be all the greater owing to the generous and complete forgiveness accorded to him. Who can say that because he was forgiven, the long habits of sin were never afterwards a source of trouble, needed not to be eradicated? Something of the same sort may be true hereafter. This kind of grief and sorrow, as well as the sense of unfitness for the Presence of God, and the loss of that Presence for a time, may be a true Purgatory, a true purification of the soul and the means by which it makes progress. As the old stains of sin are worn out the divine image is restored in the soul. Such an idea of Purgatory is absolutely unlike that taught by the Romish doctrine, and yet as the Romish doctrine is not *de fide*, this reasonable and scriptural view of Purgatory is, at any rate, tolerated in the Roman Church. It was beautifully portrayed by Dr. Newman in some lines of his poem, *The Dream of Gerontius*:—

> "And these two pains, so counter and so keen—
> The longing for Him, when thou seest Him not,
> The shame of self at thought of seeing Him,
> Will be thy veriest, sharpest Purgatory."

Some such purification hereafter, opening wide the door of hope, is now very commonly believed in

by those outside the historic Church as well as those within. Such well-known Protestants as Carl Nitzsch and Martensen in Germany, the Danish Dr. Dorner, and the learned Dr. Müller, as well as multitudes of English Protestants, unhesitatingly profess a belief that hereafter many will be enlightened and gathered into the Fold of the Good Shepherd who have seemed here to give but little ground for hope of their salvation. Among the many Broad Church Anglicans who might be cited, Dr. Farrar may especially be named as having done much to spread the "hope of the Gospel." It was supposed at one time that he denied the possibility that any could so harden themselves as to be finally lost, but this was a perversion of his teaching. When Dr. Pusey had published his book, *What is of Faith as to Everlasting Punishment?* Dr. Farrar publicly asserted that on every question that he deemed to be vital Dr. Pusey was absolutely at one with him, and that he "and Dr. Pusey argued in favour of two proposals—first, that God might reach any souls whose case to us seemed to be hopeless; and secondly, that there might be a terminable punishment in Hades in the intermediate state beyond the grave," but, on the other hand, he had "never dared to assert the abstract proposition that no punishment could be endless, or that no soul could harden itself finally against the grace of God." In other words, we are able to believe that "there is a Purgatory," while we reject equally without doubt the "Romish doctrine *concerning* Purgatory."

"It remains"—to quote Dr. Plumptre—"to ask how far the Church of England has definitely pronounced her judgment on the subject" of Purgatory. "Her twenty-second Article condemns 'the Romish doctrine (*doctrina Romanensium*) concerning Purgatory, pardons,' etc. But the Article does not formulate the doctrine which it thus condemns. As a matter of fact the Article of 1553, as Cardinal Newman urged in Tract XC., cannot have been directed against the Tridentine definition of 1569. The change of the opening words of the Article, at a time when no such change was made without a purpose, from the *doctrina Scholasticorum* (the doctrine of the Scholastics) as it stood in 1553 to the *doctrina Romanensium* of 1562, indicates that it was directed not so much against the formulated statements of Lombard or Aquinas, still less against the earlier teaching of the Greek and Latin Fathers, as against the popular current teaching of the Romish theologians of the time, and so far as the Tridentine decrees, with whatever reserves and limitations, embodied that teaching, they came under that condemnation. On the other hand, the association of Purgatory with pardons, and the fact that prayers for the dead were deliberately exempted from the censure in which some of the more vehement of the Reformers had sought to include them, may legitimately be urged in favour of a certain liberty of interpretation. Separate the doctrine of an intermediate state of progressive purification and growth in holiness from

the false theories and the corrupt practices of the *doctrina Romanensium*, fall back upon the earlier and purer conception of a Divine education, a work of healing, and then the belief in the communion of Saints comes into natural activity." [1]

These words are valuable as the expression of a learned and devout mind of the moderate Broad-Church School of thought. They show that the minds of Christian people are drawing nearer to one another, and it is now no longer our aim to show how much we differ from other parts of the Church, but how much we hold in common. This is well expressed by Dr. Plumptre: "In any case it seems clear that so far as we cherish a belief in an intermediate state of consciousness at all, it will assume, under the law of progress in theology to which all the teaching of history bears witness, a very different shape to the *doctrina Romanensium* of the sixteenth century. The teachers of our time—Roman Catholics like Cardinal Newman, Cardinal Manning, and Mr. H. N. Oxenham; English theologians like Dr. Pusey, Mr. Maurice, Dr. Farrar, and many others; Nonconformists like Mr. Cox and Mr. Baldwin Brown—all drift in one direction, and that direction is one of a larger charity and a wider hope. Our Purgatory, if we may venture to seek to rehabilitate that abused and dishonoured word, will not be confined to the baptized or to those who have known historically and through

[1] *The Spirits in Prison*, p. 307.

human teachers the revelation of God in Christ, but will include all who have lived according to the light they had, and have, in however feeble a manner, repented of their sins and followed after righteousness. It will not exclude, as the *doctrina Romanensium* then excluded, those who . . . have fallen into heresy and lost their way in controversies about the essentials or non-essentials of the faith. It will not consist in the torture of material flames or be measured according to the theory of a quantitative satisfaction. We shall refrain from asking questions that we have no data for answering . . . and shall be content to leave the whole work of discipline to the great Teacher, the whole remedial process to the great Healer. We shall not think that the souls of the dead are cut off from the sympathy and fellowship of which prayer is the expression, but we shall dismiss the dream that the gift of God can be purchased with money. We shall associate their memory with that of the sacrifice and death of Christ in our Eucharistic communion, but we shall remember that the sacrifice was made once for all, for the living and the dead . . ."[1]

This last sentence brings into prominence the subject of prayer for the departed in the Church of England. The following passage from *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man* (published in 1543 with fullest Church authority) represents the mind of the English Reformers better than the later documents

[1] *The Spirits in Prison*, p. 309.

published under the influence of foreign Protestantism. In this book we are told that "it standeth with the very order of charity for a Christian man to pray for another, both quick and dead, and to commend one another in their prayers to God's mercy, and to cause other to pray for them also, as well in Masses and exequies, as at other times, and to give alms for them, according to the usage of the Church and ancient opinion of the old Fathers; trusting that these things do not only profit and avail them, but also declare us to be charitable folk, because we have mind and desire to profit them, which, notwithstanding they be departed this present life, yet remain they still members of the same mystical body of Christ whereunto we pertain.

"And here is especially to be noted, that it is not in the power of any man to limit and dispense how much, and in what space of time, or to what person particularly the said masses, exequies, and suffrages do profit and avail; therefore charity requireth that whosoever causeth any such masses, exequies, or suffrages to be done, should yet (though their intent be more for one than for another) cause them also to be done for the universal congregation of Christian people, quick and dead; for that power and knowledge afore rehearsed pertaineth only unto God, Which alone knoweth the measures and times of His own judgment and mercies.

"Furthermore, because the place where the souls

remain, the name thereof, the state and condition which they be in, be to us uncertain, therefore these, with all such other things, must also be left to Almighty God, unto Whose mercy it is meet and convenient for us to commend them, trusting that God accepteth our prayers for them; reserving the rest wholly to God, unto Whom is known their estate and condition; and not we to take upon us, neither in the one part nor yet in the other, to give any fond and temerarious judgment in so high things so far passing our knowledge."

In the First Prayer-book of Edward the Sixth (which those who greatly esteem Acts of Parliament will do well to remember was declared by Act of Parliament to have been written "by the aid of the Holy Ghost," and to be "a very godly order, agreeable to the Word of God and the primitive Church") prayers for the departed were plainly worded, so that there could not be, as in the later Prayer-books, any dispute as to their meaning. The fact cannot be denied that in the Second Prayer-book such prayers were either omitted or rewritten, so as to be capable of use by the more narrow-minded Puritan party, inspired from abroad. But while we may lament that the Church of England allowed the later Reformers to depart from the practice of the primitive Church to which in theory she appealed, we may also remember that she distinctly refused to allow prayers for the departed to be condemned.

There is no primitive Liturgy without a prayer for, or commemoration of, the departed. Our own Liturgy, though falling short of the primitive pattern, has still so far retained the old idea that it contains the petition, "that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His Blood, we and *all Thy whole Church* may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of His Passion." In another prayer we have a thanksgiving "for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear," followed by words that some consider to be a prayer, "beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that *with them* we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom." In the Burial Office there are similar words: "Beseeching Thee . . . that we, *with all those that are departed* in the true faith of Thy Holy Name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thy eternal and everlasting glory." The addition, however, of the words "militant here on earth" to the former invitation, "Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church," together with the omission of the plain prayers for the departed that were in the First Book of Edward the Sixth, make it probable that the compilers of the later books wished to imply the doctrine—already referred to—that taught the instantaneous perfecting of the righteous, and their immediate entry into Heaven.[1] This is confirmed by the words of the *Homily on Prayer*, which denies in

[1] See p. 347.

so many words that there is any intermediate *place* at all: "As the Scripture teacheth us, let us think that the soul of man passing out of the body goeth straightway either to heaven or hell, *whereof the one needeth no prayer* and the other is without redemption. Let us not therefore dream either of Purgatory or of prayer for the souls of them that be dead."[1]

The *Homilies*, although, speaking generally, they contain "a godly and wholesome doctrine," are not to be taken seriously when they touch on points of controversy with Rome. They represent the exaggerated reaction against Romanism that, for a while, disturbed the judgment of the later reformers and caused them to do and say much that is now best forgotten, as we are in no way bound by their opinions. The present Archbishop of Canterbury will not be suspected of "Romanising," and therefore his words on the subject of prayer for the departed may be quoted as representative of the average belief and practice of the Anglican Church, removed alike from the nearer approach of some individual Churchmen to Rome on the one hand, or to Geneva on the other:—

"There is, of course, a very great difference between praying to the departed and praying for them. They are in God's Hands; but it is possible that He may allow our prayers to help them, and we cannot point

[1] This denial of an intermediate *place* recalls the Eastern doctrine, but the denial of the use of prayer for the departed is of course perfectly unorthodox.

out any evil that is likely to come from such prayers, provided only that we do not allow ourselves to be led into adopting dreams and fictions concerning their conditions. We do not know—we cannot know—for God has not told us, what is happening to them in that other world, and we have no right to set up inventions of our own, and adapt our worship to such inventions. What they may need, in order to be fitted for the final entrance into perfect happiness, we cannot tell. We are told that there will be at the Last Day some whose work will be burnt, but who nevertheless will themselves be saved. And we see men die who seem to be forgiven, but nevertheless are so full of imperfections that we can hardly believe them as yet fit for Heaven. *They are not yet sanctified.* They have not that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. We have no right to invent accounts of the *way* by which they may be purified. We know that they will be changed when the Lord comes; but the nature, the manner, and the process of that change is not made known. *To pray for the dead is not forbidden by the New Testament, and it is not forbidden by the Church of England, and our Ecclesiastical Courts accordingly have so decided it.* But while the Church of England nowhere forbids prayers for the departed, it nevertheless does not authorise the introduction of such prayers into our public worship except in the most cautious and guarded manner. In our public worship we pray for ourselves, that we 'with all those that are departed

in the true faith of God's holy Name may have our perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in God's eternal and everlasting glory.' This is the model which we are bound to follow in our public worship. We ought to confine ourselves within the limits here indicated, for where we know so little it is a duty of reverence to let our words be few, lest perchance there may be something said which is inconsistent with that which God is doing, lest perchance we may be pretending to understand what is altogether hidden, lest perchance we induce others, in following our example, to be incautious and to step beyond the limits which ought to confine all approaches to the very Presence of God. In our private prayers there is nothing in the Church of England teaching to forbid our prayers for those whom we love, and who are gone before us, but in our public worship there is need of that kind of reverence which restrains the language and which perpetually acknowledges our own ignorance—our ignorance both as to what is happening in the world of spirits, and our ignorance of how God will bring to a completion the work which He has begun in Christian souls."[1]

It would no doubt be a piece of private judgment and contrary to "Catholic usage" for any priest to add prayers for the departed to the Public Offices of

[1] *Visitation*, held at Canterbury by the Primate (F. Temple, D.D.), October, 1898.

the Book of Common Prayer, but in special services of a more popular sort, as well as in private prayer, there is no apparent reason why we should not pray for those blessings to be granted to the departed that the Church desires for the soul when it leaves the body. As far as we of the Church of England are concerned these *desiderata* are expressed in the authoritative prayers of the Anglican communion—a few of which may here be noticed. We may pray, surely, after the soul has left the body as well as up to the moment of its departure, that it "may be received into Thine everlasting kingdom," into "heavenly habitations" where "the spirits of just men made perfect . . . are in joy and felicity"; we may moreover ask God to receive the souls that depart hence, to "wash them in the Blood of that Immaculate Lamb that was slain to take away the sins of the world," and to purge and do away "whatsoever defilements" have been "contracted in the midst of this miserable and naughty world," so that, "pure and without spot,"[1] the souls of the departed may be presented before God and be found worthy to live with Him. In addition to these prayers our appeal to the primitive Church would quite justify the use of the prayers found in the Greek Liturgies which ask for the soul rest, light, joy, and peace. All these and such like petitions do not attempt to dogmatise as to the "nature, the

[1] The above expressions are found in the collects for the *Visitation of the Sick*, and in the *Order for the Burial of the Dead*.

manner, and the process" of the change from imperfection to holiness which we hope and pray for on behalf of the souls of the departed. Few better prayers for the departed could be found than the one "for a sick person at the point of departure" in the Book of Common Prayer.[1]

There can be no doubt that it was in union with the Eucharistic Sacrifice that the primitive Church desired especially that prayer should be made for the living on earth, and the living who have departed hence. They who understand the power of the representation of the Sacrifice once offered on Calvary will not need to be told that the Eucharist is the most prevailing suffrage that the Church Militant can offer for the Church Expectant. We cannot say how our Eucharists and prayers help the departed—for we know but little of the way in which prayer is efficacious even for those on earth. We nevertheless believe that God accepts our prayers, and above all, the Memorial of the Great Sacrifice which is the one Divine Service that has been given to us, instituted by God Himself.

To sum up. It is possible that the souls of the departed who are capable of salvation are perfected in an instant, at their departure from the body, but we do not know that this is so, or that if it is so with some, it must necessarily be so with all. If the departed are gradually perfected, according to those laws of

[1] Quoted on p. 224.

continuity on which Butler rests the main argument of his *Analogy*, then, although we know not how much our prayers may help in the work of progress, we may pray in faith and hope, following the guidance and example of the Church of God—Jewish as well as Christian—assured that the whole Church would not have been allowed to go astray. This witness of the Church is confirmed by the practice of prayers and rites for the departed finding a place also in many of the religions of antiquity. If "prayer is the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed," we believe that all men do really pray for the departed, since all sincerely desire their welfare from God. Above all other suffrages we should value the Eucharist and offer it for those who have been redeemed by the Sacrifice it commemorates.

We cannot dogmatise as to where the souls may be whom God is perfecting; they are "where Thou, O God, knowest"—in Thy Hand. We believe no torment can touch them, but since, wherever they are, they are being washed in the Precious Blood and purified and purged from all defilements, the state of these souls is not unfitly called one of purification—a Purgatory. And, being solicitous rather of agreement with others than of discord, we can thankfully profess that we have no quarrel with the *dogmatic* teaching of the rest of the Western Church, that "There is a Purgatory, and that the souls detained there are helped by the prayers of the faithful, and, above all, by the acceptable

Sacrifice of the Altar."[1] We regret that there is still a "Romish doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, etc.," which must be condemned now, as it was in the sixteenth century, as "a fond thing vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God."

[1] Explained as suggested by Father Hunter, S.J. See p. 293.

XVII.

"Jesus, and the Resurrection"

"Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: Whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."—ST. PAUL (1 Cor. xv. 12–18).

". . . he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection."—Acts xvii. 18.

XVII.

"Jesus, and the Resurrection"

THE Christian faith differs from the anticipations of the future life that are found in Paganism in the high dignity it reveals as in store for the human body. The great teachers of ancient Greece and Rome believed the soul to be immortal, and taught that in the life after death the emancipation of the soul from the body was its supreme reward, enabling the soul to attain to the fullest knowledge. Plato taught that the body was nothing but a hindrance to the progress of the soul; he could not foresee that it was capable of redemption, and in another life could become the fitting instrument of the soul. In the *Phædo* he puts these words (among many others to the same effect) into the mouth of "real philosophers": "It has been proved to us by experience that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be quit of the body—the soul in herself must behold things in themselves: and then we shall attain to the wisdom which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers; not while we live, but after death; for if while in company with the body the soul cannot

have pure knowledge, one of two things follows—either knowledge is not to be attained at all, or, if at all, after death. For then, and not till then, the soul will be parted from the body and exist in herself alone. In this present life I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible intercourse or communion with the body, and are not surfeited with the bodily nature, but keep ourselves pure until the hour when God Himself is pleased to release us. And thus, having got rid of the foolishness of the body, we shall be pure and hold converse with the pure, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere, which is no other than the light of truth. . . . And what is purification but the separation of the soul from the body?"[1] It is only the sensual who make much of the body. The souls of such men after death are doomed to "prowl about tombs and sepulchres" until, as a penalty, "they are imprisoned finally in another body."[2]

In many parts of the Bible the body is spoken of as a hindrance to the soul. We are told that "the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthy tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things";[3] and St. Paul's words: "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"[4] are as strong as any that Plato wrote. St. Paul, however, had a sure and certain hope not

[1] *Phædo*, 66, 67.
[2] *Id.* 81.
[3] Wisdom ix. 15.
[4] Romans vii, 24.

merely for the spirit of man after death, but for man as a whole. He prays not so much for an emancipation of the soul from the body as for the redemption of the body, and the preservation of the whole man—body, soul, and spirit—"blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."[1] It was upon the "hope and resurrection of the dead"[2] that St. Paul based his anticipation of a hereafter. So strongly does he insist upon this that he does not scruple to say the whole Christian faith in this world, and the whole Christian hope for the life of the world to come, depend upon the resurrection of the dead, and that the hope of the resurrection is based upon the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. "If Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: Whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."[3] If there was to be no resurrection of the dead, it would seem that St. Paul could not hope for that fuller life which Plato had written about. The

[1] 1 Thess. v. 23. [2] Acts xxiii. 6. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 12–18.

survival of the soul in endless separation from the body, so far from being a more complete and perfect state, appeared to St. Paul as the triumph of death, so that he could only say that if there is no resurrection, then they which "are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." This divergence from the doctrine of Plato no doubt had its origin in a radically different doctrine concerning the soul. In Plato's philosophy the soul exists before the body; it is, in fact, without beginning and without end, and is sent into a human body owing to some imperfection. It falls from heaven to earth and enters into a body for which it was not originally designed; hence its union with the body is accidental and penal. The Christian doctrine teaches quite the reverse. The soul is created for the human body; apart from the body it is, even when perfect in itself, accidentally imperfect, inasmuch as it lacks that bodily organism which it was designed to inform. Death is therefore not conquered by the escape of the soul from the body, but by the body being through death prepared for a reunion with the soul, and gifted with a perfect life. Sown in corruption, the body is raised in incorruption; sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; sown in weakness, it is raised in power. In this way the whole man—and not merely the soul—overcomes death and enters into life. It may be for this reason that so little is said in Holy Scripture of the soul in the intermediate state. That state was altered by the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension

of Jesus Christ, and so any description of it before the Incarnation would have had to be amended afterwards. The same is true of the state of the soul after death from the time of our Lord's Ascension until His Second Coming. It is not a final state, not an eternal one, and it does not concern man, but man's soul. Hence it may be that while we cannot be indifferent to what may be the lot of the soul apart from the body, we are not so to fix our gaze upon the soul as to forget that the final revelation of God concerns the whole man, and consequently we should look on to that "life of the world to come" which follows after "the resurrection of the flesh." St. Paul therefore bases the faith and the hope of the Christian upon the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

It is of course perfectly true that our Lord's Resurrection is and always has been a stumbling-block to many. If the Apostles could have been content to ignore this doctrine, and to preach merely a figurative resurrection of Jesus Christ, they might, humanly speaking, have succeeded more easily in persuading men to accept their doctrine. It was because "he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection" that St. Paul met with so great resistance from "certain philosophers of the Epicureans and Stoicks."[1] It was "when they heard of the resurrection" that "some mocked."[2] We may be sure, then, that the resurrection was an absolutely essential part of the Gospel, and that to leave it out

[1] Acts xvii. 18. [2] Acts xvii. 32.

or explain it away would have been to proclaim "another gospel; which is not another,"[1] but a weak and emasculated distortion of the truth.

The indisputable fact that Christianity has triumphed over all the opposing forces of a hostile world, and that now, after nineteen centuries, the Name of Jesus Christ is confessedly above every name, has never been explained by those who deny that Jesus Christ ever really rose from the dead. Christianity is an absolutely unique fact, and traces its origin to a unique character and life, through a series of events without parallel in the history of the human race.

That Jesus Christ stands on an elevation which is solitary and unrivalled is not usually denied by intelligent persons. But if He stands thus alone, His greatness must be due to some cause different from those forces which have produced other great men. A unique effect is before the eyes of the world, and it surely leads us to expect a unique cause. All that we know about Jesus Christ beyond the mere fact that He lived and died is what we are told in the New Testament. His character as depicted in the Gospels is generally allowed to be the noblest ever portrayed in literature.

It is almost inconceivable that an impostor, or one a prey to self-deception, should occupy the place that Jesus Christ has for nineteen centuries held in Christendom. It is equally difficult to suppose that all the love and worship of the Church during these long ages

[1] Gal. i. 6, 7.

have been offered to a hero of fiction. We can only say that if the portrait of Jesus Christ drawn by the Evangelists is a merely imaginary one, and the teaching attributed to Him is the invention of some fraudulent writers of a later age, then these men must for ever rank as the greatest of literary and imaginative authors. Their work is little less than a miraculous effort of genius. No one will pretend that any other book has ever been to the world at large what the New Testament has been, or that any other character has influenced men as they have been influenced by the character and teaching of the Christ as portrayed by the Evangelists. No; the Divinity of Jesus Christ is the unique cause which can alone account for the undeniably unique effect of His life and doctrine upon the best and noblest people of the world. Other men have done much, and their names are deservedly held in honour, but there is no parallel known in history to that success which has been achieved by the Name of Jesus Christ.

Christianity is not merely a doctrinal system, a code of ethics, or even the veneration of a great teacher, but it is the worship and service of Christ Jesus, founded upon a belief in His Divinity. It is the acceptance of all that is implied in the simple and yet profound doctrine of St. John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . And the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us." Such an Incarnation has

happened but once, and therefore we are not surprised that its influence has no parallel; that never man spake like the Incarnate Son, Who had "the words of eternal life."[1] Other great teachers have asserted their influence and made for themselves a name before their death, but Jesus Christ died almost unknown, and forsaken by all. As men reckon failure, no man ever failed more completely than Jesus Christ seemed to have failed at the moment of His death. And if now He is everywhere known, loved, and worshipped, and has made disciples of the greatest and best of men of all nations, it is due to the fact, not merely that He "was crucified, dead, and buried," but that "the third day He rose again from the dead." The reality of His Resurrection proved to be beyond the power of men to dispute, and so by the sheer force of truth won them to the obedience of the risen Lord.

No one can seriously maintain that the belief in the Resurrection originated in a fraud. Those who deny that in the ordinary sense of the word, and not figuratively, Christ rose from the dead, now very generally maintain that the Apostles were victims of some mental hallucination. This explanation is known as "the theory of visions." According to this theory Christ never rose from the dead: nobody knows what became of His dead body, but His credulous Apostles, having quite made up their minds that He would rise again, fancied that they actually saw Him alive; they

[1] St. John vi. 68.

had imaginary interviews with their Master, and supposed that He told them to found a Society called the Church. For some reason—not explained—all the Apostles and disciples at a given moment ceased to see these visions and were impressed with the further extraordinary idea that their Lord had ascended into Heaven, and that angels had told them He would come again in like manner as He had departed. On these delusions the Apostles founded the Church and went everywhere making disciples. The Church these visionaries founded has, strange to say, outlived all the monarchies of the world, and in the twentieth century of her life shows no signs of decrepitude or approaching dissolution; she still preaches with unfaltering voice "Jesus, and the Resurrection," still finds the example of our Lord all she needs for the regeneration of mankind.

According to those who deny the Resurrection, falsehood and delusion have been the great saviours of the world, and have made men love truth and righteousness. Beelzebub has indeed turned his weapons against himself, and become the great Exorcist. In fact, the theory of visions in getting rid of one miracle seems to have surrounded us with a network of incredible marvels. We entirely reject the theory of visions because it supposes that an evil tree can bring forth good fruit; that hallucination has for nineteen centuries been the mainspring of all that is best and truest in Christendom.

But there are other reasons for the rejection of this endeavour of rationalism to destroy the Gospel. If we are to pay any attention to the story told in the New Testament, we find that there was no "fixed idea" in the minds of the Apostles as to a resurrection, and the "fixed idea" is one of the three mental conditions required to enable even the most credulous to see visions and mistake them for realities. Again, those possessed by this "fixed idea" always see what they expect to see. When our Lord appeared, those who saw Him are represented as either not knowing Him or being slow to recognise their Master. Now, no "idea" of a resurrection body that was not an exact reproduction of the body that had been buried was familiar to the Jews. If the excited fancy of the Apostles and women had pictured the risen Christ, they would most assuredly have imagined Him to be in appearance exactly as He had been before the Passion. The fact that our Lord was not recognised immediately by those who saw Him—and yet the reality of His Resurrection was forced upon them—is a strong proof that the Resurrection was a reality, for which no "fixed idea" had prepared His disciples. We who know that the body is "changed" in the resurrection can quite understand how those who were still in the "natural body" might fail to recognise One Who had put on the "spiritual body" of the other world. But the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, involving change, a change in its nature, was

so far from being a "fixed idea" that it was not even known to the most enlightened of the Jews before the Resurrection of Christ and the preaching of St. Paul. The theory of visions may well be dismissed as itself being an hallucination, originating in the "fixed idea" that anything beyond the power of the natural reason of man to explain must be against reason, and therefore impossible.

The other theories that attempt to account for a belief in the Resurrection of our Lord are now not often put forward, but it may be well just to glance at them. The first theory supposes that our Lord did not really die upon the Cross, but that He fainted and was taken down from the Cross—everyone supposing Him to be dead. His body was rapidly embalmed and placed in a tomb, the entrance to which was blocked by a great mass of rock. A seal was placed on the stone, and some soldiers were appointed to guard the sepulchre in order to hinder anyone attempting to carry away the body. In the sepulchre our Lord—it is said—recovered from His swoon, and in spite of having been drained of His blood by the hours on the Cross, managed to escape from the sealed tomb and elude the guards. This theory does not explain how it became possible that our Lord should have appeared dead to all who were concerned with the taking down of His body from the Cross and carrying It to burial, and yet have been able to recover strength in such a miraculous way as to make it possible for Him to escape from the tomb.

Nor are we told what became of Jesus Christ during the rest of His life, or how it was that after His reported Ascension there is no trace of Him to be found on earth. We should also require some explanation why His disciples suddenly deserted Him and proceeded to invent the story of His Resurrection, and how it was that anyone of such a lofty character as that of Jesus Christ connived at their falsehoods, by so effectually concealing Himself. Again, the motive which induced the Apostles to invent the story of His Resurrection and Ascension must have been a strong one, for they certainly had to endure persecution and even death on account of it. These and other difficulties lie on the surface of the story that our Lord did not really die, but merely swooned and then recovered.

The theory that the Apostles stole away the body of our Lord is also one beset with difficulties. It was, however, the only tale put forward at the time by those who were anxious to deny the Resurrection. We read that the Jews gave "money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole Him away while we slept."[1] As the watch had been set on purpose to hinder any from stealing the body, it is difficult to conceive that the Apostles, not hitherto noted for their courage, came by night (in the full light of the Paschal moon) and, braving the watch, succeeded in rolling away the stone and carrying off their Master's

[1] St. Matt. xxviii. 12, 13.

body. Is it likely that if they had done this no confession would ever have been made by any of the persons concerned in this fraud? Can we suppose that men who could write such epistles as those of St. Peter and St. John were capable of so gross an imposture as to pretend Christ had risen from the dead, if they were all the while conscious of having carried off His dead body? Nor can we evade the difficulty by supposing that the dead Christ was carried away by some persons in order to deceive the Apostles and make them think that Jesus Christ had arisen. None but their enemies would have practised such a deception upon the Apostles, and we may be sure that after the Apostles had preached the Resurrection these enemies would have been only too glad to produce the dead Christ and overwhelm them with mockery and contempt.

As a matter of fact, no theory has ever been put forward that does not bristle with impossibilities. It is, however, sometimes said that the whole Gospel story is a late invention, and that it would be of the greatest interest to know what the chief priests and others really said about the story of the Resurrection, instead of what the Evangelists say they said. In reply to this we may safely say that if the chief priests and others who were interested in denying the Resurrection had brought forward any other theory than that the Evangelists mention, we should certainly have heard of it. We possess the writings of the early Apologists

for Christianity, and the fact that in combating the opposition of the Jews and Gentiles they make no mention of any theories, other than those we are familiar with, put forward to account for the belief in the Resurrection of our Lord, is a sufficient proof that no such theories were current at the time. Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and the rest would not have hoped to make converts by insisting upon the Resurrection if they were aware that it had been shown to be an imposture. Therefore, whether we accept or reject the story given by the Evangelists, we may be quite sure that no other story was put forward, while the fact of our Lord's Resurrection was everywhere insisted upon by His disciples. The best witness to the truth of the Christian faith is to be found in its influence upon the world. In the long run it is always true that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit—that imposture and hallucination cannot produce a zeal for truth and righteousness. The fact remains, plain and unalterable, "The Stone which the builders refused *is* become"—whether we like it or no—"the Head-stone of the corner." All we can say is, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."[1]

It is not the purpose of this volume even to touch on the bearing of the Resurrection of our Lord upon Christian life and hope, but it is well once again to draw attention to the fact that what revelation there is as to the future life concerns not so much the soul alone

[1] Ps. cxviii. 22, 23.

as the whole man. The promise of the Gospel is that "if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies, because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you."[1] Christ is "the firstfruits of them that are asleep"[2]—the witness that they who fall asleep in Him do not perish, but are destined to a full and perfect life of which we can here form no adequate conception. The spirit is torn apart from the body by death, and passes into the spiritual world to be more fully educated, and developed, and perfected. The natural body goes to corruption. St. Paul's assertion is sometimes ignored, "Thou sowest not that body that shall be."[3] The body that is destined to clothe the soul is re-fashioned by God, and we know but little about it except that it is not the natural body that is raised to life, but a spiritual body—adapted to the new life, and entirely obedient to the soul. The risen body of our Lord was certainly in one sense the same body that was laid in the sepulchre, since the body that was buried no longer remained there. And yet it was altered, transfigured, spiritualised. Being raised from the dead, it was no longer capable of suffering, it was impassible. It belonged to the spiritual kingdom, and was no longer subject to the laws that regulate the body in its natural condition. It was endowed with a new subtilty which enabled it to pass at

[1] Rom. viii. 11 (R.V., margin). [2] 1 Cor. xv. 20 (R.V.).
[3] 1 Cor. xv. 37.

will through the rock that formed the door of the tomb, and through the closed doors of the upper room where the disciples were assembled. Again, the body of the risen Lord was no longer limited by the restrictions that regulate our motion from place to place; hither and thither He passed with an agility quick as thought. How far the risen body of fallen man will share in these and other attributes of the Resurrection body of Christ Jesus we cannot say positively. Our Lord's body was changed from being a "natural body" to a "spiritual body" some time between His burial and His Resurrection. His body never saw corruption—He preserved His personal identity—but He was so changed that those who had known Him intimately were not at once sure that they beheld their Lord. We are evidently here in the presence of mysteries that concern a world of which we have as yet no experience and but little revelation. All we can perhaps say is that, although our material perishable body will be laid in the grave and become a prey to corruption, we too, like our Lord, shall be raised in incorruption, and our identity will be retained, though our body will certainly not be composed of the same decaying matter that was buried—"Thou sowest not that body that shall be." St. Paul would lead us to suppose that when we awake we shall be found in the likeness of Christ; for he says: "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like

unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself."[1]

What the conditions of that new life will be we cannot guess—we shall be "like unto the angels," and the angels are ever in Holy Writ shown to us as engaged in the worship of God through the service of men. Even here on earth—when mind and body are filled with health, and man is surrounded by congenial friends and his affections fully satisfied—great happiness is possible; who can say what increase of happiness may be ours when all that mars the soul and hampers the body is removed, when every faculty is perfected and every desire is capable of being completely satisfied? Here on earth even the most highly gifted—thirsting for knowledge as they may, and finding in its increase the keenest pleasure—can but imperfectly master one or two branches of learning; what, then, shall be their joy "when that which is perfect is come," when they know no longer in part, but even as they are known—perfectly, intimately, absolutely!

And then again, how great is the happiness brought to man here on earth through the affections. Love is the master-passion of the soul, but, after all, it is never without alloy, never without the fear of loss, through death or through something worse than death. But hereafter love will also be made perfect. Faith and hope will not be needed, but love will remain and

[1] Phil. iii. 20, 21.

be intensified, for love is eternal, since God is Love. But here we can go no further. There is little, if anything, in Holy Scripture to encourage that view of the next life which too often is almost exclusively dwelt upon. There is next to nothing said about the continuance hereafter of those ties of affection which have been formed on earth. One thing is certain: all that is essential to perfect happiness will be the portion of those who attain to that world and the new life of the children of the resurrection. The Word of God, however, leads us to look for this complete satisfaction in God rather than in creatures. As we are taught that identity, memory, and consciousness are all retained hereafter, there is indeed every reason to believe that in the next world we shall find again those whom we have "loved long since and lost awhile," but so little does this reunion belong to the essential beatitude of the life of the world to come that it is quite ignored in Holy Scripture. The bliss of the redeemed is everywhere represented as resulting from the fact that they "see God," are "with Christ," and filled with the joy of their Lord. In our present life—so little capable as we are of knowing, loving, and serving God—this may sound cold and unsatisfying, but dare we add to the Word of God, and for the sake of "comfort" turn to other and lower objects? Not till we "see God" shall we know Him, and till we know Him we cannot know how great may be the satisfaction found in loving Him.

We know that in this life there are various degrees of intensity in love. Father and mother and friends are all left in order that a man may cleave to his wife. He does not cease to love them—far otherwise—but neither their tears nor their anger will hold him back from the influence of the newer and stronger passion. Some such love as this our Lord certainly claimed: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple."[1] It is not for a moment to be supposed our Lord meant in any way to weaken the legitimate ties of human love; on the contrary, He made love for one another, duty to parents, and loyal friendship, supreme tests of discipleship. In His filial love and reverence for Mary His Mother, in His care for His disciples, and in His special particular friendship with St. John, our Lord hallowed human love: in this, as in other respects, He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. What He apparently meant was that the love of God must take precedence of all other. Hereafter, therefore, when God is "all in all,"[2] and is known not in part but perfectly, it may well be that even the strongest and holiest ties formed on earth will be found unsatisfying, or rather that they can only meet in God and be satisfied. Was it not with some meaning of this kind that our Lord said: "In the resurrection

[1] St. Luke xiv. 26. [2] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven"?[1] All that in the ties of love formed on earth is capable of adding to our beatitude hereafter will doubtless be preserved, but the Word of God—full as that Word is of the sanctity of human love—does not warrant us in looking upon these ties, apart from God, as forming the essential beatitude of the risen life. His promise is: "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty";[2] and His Apostle assures us that "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."[3] How this can satisfy the soul we may not now—earth-bound as we are—be able to conceive, but that it will do so we are sure. It is not in the things we have seen and known here below, or in the affections which have here possessed our hearts, that we shall hereafter find all we need, but in the things of which we are now altogether unable to form any adequate conception. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."[4]

It is enough for us, is it not, to know that by the love we bear towards one another on earth—by love of parents, wife, children, and friends—we are preparing for the eternal love of Him in Whom all live and move and have their being,—and in Whom we shall find hereafter all that we have trusted to Him here on earth?

[1] St. Matt. xxii. 30.
[2] Isa. xxxiii. 17.
[3] 1 St. John iii. 2.
[4] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

We can learn to say with the great Apostle, "I know Whom I have trusted (believed), and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. . . ."[1] "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."[2]

With the thought of the resurrection of the body we reach the conclusion of our subject—the intermediate state of the soul. That state begins when the soul is separated from the body by death: it ends when death is swallowed up in victory and the body and soul are reunited for eternal life. We have seen what is the hope for the departed that—taken as a whole—the Church has entertained from the first. It is summed up in the words of St. Paul to the Philippians, where he says that he is "confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ." The perfecting of the spirit may be soon accomplished, but the whole man will only be perfected when death is overcome and man is made whole in the resurrection.

"Soul and body reunited,
Thenceforth nothing shall divide,
Waking up in Christ's own likeness
Satisfied."

[1] 2 Tim. i. 12. [2] 1 St. Peter i. 3, 4.

APPENDIX

The Doctrine of the Orthodox Eastern Church

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER XIII.

The Doctrine of the Orthodox Eastern Church

SINCE this volume was sent to the press the perennial controversy as to the teaching of the Holy Eastern Church has been renewed in the columns of one of the Church newspapers. I do not think that anything has been said which would make it necessary for me to alter what I have written in this volume as to the Eastern doctrine concerning the souls in the Intermediate—disembodied—State. In my book *The Soul Here and Hereafter* (1898) I stated what I still believe to be the truth, namely, that the Primitive Liturgies represent the unsettled eschatology of the Early Church, while the *Orthodox Confession*, the eighteenth decree of the Synod of Bethlehem, and the teaching of such a first-rate theologian as the Russian Bishop Macarius, represent the doctrine that was popular in the Church during the Middle Ages, and prevailed both in the East and West until about the time of the Council of Florence, 1439. This doctrine was not a novelty. It was in substance the belief of those among the ancient Greeks, Romans, and Jews who believed in the survival of the soul and future rewards and punishments. The doctrine was apparently held as an opinion by one or two of the Fathers. It cannot be said, however, to have been taught at all generally, or as other than an opinion. During the Middle Ages, when the tone of Primitive teaching had been in a great measure forgotten,

the belief referred to was very generally accepted, and it is this doctrine, I believe, that the Eastern Church has officially maintained, although she has never explicitly defined it as a dogma to be held by all her children. Consequently there are, doubtless, very many in the modern Eastern Church who hold other opinions. The horror of the mediæval doctrine expressed by some Anglicans and their refusal to allow that any such belief is taught in the Eastern Church, in spite of the plain words of her theologians, only serves to remind us of the gulf that separates the theology of this century from that of the Middle Ages, and, indeed, from the opinions of some of the Fathers. To the modern mind it may seem "fiendish" to suppose that souls destined eventually for Heaven should be detained in Hell, or in a Purgatory that is "Hell" in all but the name. To the theologians of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, however, the thought was not so uncongenial. The Eastern Church is proverbially conservative, but nevertheless much that she jealously guards is not representative of the tone of the Primitive Church. Her theologians strongly reject the developments of modern Rome, but they equally strongly defend doctrines and practices that were developed—though not originated—between the fifth and twelfth centuries. For instance, at the Bonn Conference, 1874, the Greeks refused to assent to the following thesis proposed by Döllinger: "We acknowledge that the invocation of saints is not commanded as a duty necessary to salvation for every Christian." Any enlightened modern Roman theologian would assent to this proposition, but not so the Greeks. Archpriest Janyschew replied, "The invocation of saints has been in all ages a prevailing and universally diffused practice in the Church, and we have no reason to oppose the practice." Rhossis declared the "thesis seems to contradict the decrees of the seventh General

Council on the Invocation of Saints." In spite of all explanation the Orthodox rejected the thesis. They refused, as Janyschew said, to "discriminate between a duty and a practice recommended by the Church." I do not, of course, maintain that the invocation of saints is merely a mediæval practice. It dates from the Church of the great Fathers (see p. 189), but the mental attitude of the Greeks at Bonn in regard to this was characteristic rather of the twelfth than of the nineteenth century.

As to the main point of controversy in the Greek teaching about the souls in the intermediate state, we must go back to the centuries before the Council of Florence for guidance. At that time it was commonly held that, speaking generally, the Unseen World was composed of two states, Heaven and Hell. According to the belief of the pre-Christian religions of Greece and Rome, and that held by some of the Jews, Hell was thought of as a place where some souls were temporarily punished, and others eternally. The Latins, about the time of St. Thomas Aquinas (1224–74), taught that there is a middle *place* between Heaven and Hell, called Purgatory, in which the souls of the penitent but sin-stained are kept apart from the damned, and purified. The Greeks rejected this innovation, and officially they have kept to the older belief popular in the Middle Ages.

It is really throwing dust in people's eyes for controversialists to try and harmonise the more authoritative Greek teaching with the latest and most mild theories of modern Anglican eschatology. As I have said, the Greek and Roman doctrine is essentially (as Macarius allows) much the same, and to the mediæval mind was by no means so horrible as it seems to the fastidious taste of the twentieth century. What the Greeks reject now, as formerly, is the Latin innovation of Purgatory as a middle place. The old-fashioned

Romanist Bishop Hayes wrote, "This place [Purgatory] cannot be heaven, for in heaven there can be no suffering. It cannot be hell, for out of hell there is no redemption, and those who die in a state of grace cannot be condemned for ever; therefore *it must be a middle place distinct from both.*" Anyone who compares this statement with Macarius' teaching in his *Observation sur le Purgatoire* will see what he denies.

"Il n'y a pas un lieu particulier intermédiare où se trouvent et font l'objet des prières de l'Église les âmes de ceux qui firent pénitence avant leur mort; toutes ces âmes vont en enfer, d'où elles ne peuvent être tirées que par ses prières."[1]

Words could hardly more plainly teach the belief once held by the ancient Jews, Greeks, Romans, and hinted at by St. John Chrysostom, a belief shared by the Latin Church in the Middle Ages, before the theory of Purgatory as a distinct place was developed. The belief that the damned pass at once to Hell is still taught in the Latin Church, and Purgatory is frequently made to differ from Hell in nothing but the name. There is, therefore, no reason to suppose that the authoritative documents of the Eastern Church were intended to teach that "Hell" or "Heaven" are closed until the day of resurrection. Their teaching is not compatible—any more than the Latin doctrine—with such a belief. It is, however, quite true that in both Heaven and Hell the Greeks teach that there are degrees of glory or pain. The souls of the damned are necessarily in a worse state than those of the penitent, since the latter have the knowledge of their final salvation and a growing sense of their approaching deliverance from Hades.

[1] "There is no special intermediate *place* where those who become penitent before death find themselves, and are the object of the Church's prayers; all such souls go to Hell [Hades], from which they can only be delivered by her prayers."

This seems what Theodoret meant when he said, "There is one Ades to all, but light to some, dark to others." An author in Suidas says that "in Ades it must needs be well with some, worse with others."

As to the Beatific Vision the Greeks are not clear if it is granted before the resurrection. They seem to prefer the statement that the souls of the perfected righteous enjoy (in Heaven before their final reward) the sight of Jesus Christ.[1] The following quotation from the *Longer Catechism*, by the late enlightened Metropolitan of Moscow — His Holiness Philaret—may be quoted here. Philaret represents the modern school of Easterns rather than that which finds expression in the more authoritative and official documents, such as those of the Synod of Bethlehem.

"*Question.* In what condition are the souls of the departed until the general resurrection? *Answer.* The souls of the just are in light and peace, and enjoy a foretaste of everlasting bliss; but the souls of the sinful are in a condition the reverse of this. *Q.* Why do not the souls of the just enjoy the consummation of their bliss immediately after death? *A.* Because it has been foreordained that the full recompense of the whole man shall be delayed until the resurrection of the body and the last Judgment (2 Tim. iv. 8; 2 Cor. v. 10). *Q.* Does this foretaste of bliss include the actual vision of Jesus Christ Himself? *A.* It does so, especially in the case of the saints, for St. Paul seems to imply as much when he says, 'I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ' (Phil. i. 23). *Q.* What may be remarked of such souls as have departed with faith, but without having had

[1] Macarius, however, says that the disembodied righteous "see God face to face." In speaking of the reward granted after the resurrection he repeats this, and adds, "*le seul et vrai Dieu dans sa triple hypostase.*" See p. 401.

time to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance? *A.* This: that they may be aided towards the attainment of a blessed resurrection by prayers offered in their behalf, especially such as are offered in union with the Oblation of the Bloodless Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, and by works of mercy done in faith for their memory. *Q.* On what is this doctrine founded? *A.* On the constant tradition of the Catholic Church . . . St. Basil the Great, in his prayer for Pentecost, says that the Lord vouchsafes to receive from us propitiatory prayers and sacrifices for those that are kept in Hades, and allows us the hope of obtaining for them peace, relief, and freedom" (pp. 98–100).

The Latin version of the *Orthodox Confession* (see p. 268) speaks of what Macarius calls "the place of grief and pain," *i.e.* Hades, by the names of *Orcus* and *Acheron*, names that are familiar to us in the classics of pagan antiquity, and confirm the statement that the Greeks think of Hades as including "Hell." I need hardly say I am not here concerned with the question as to whether the Orthodox teaching is true or false. I merely state it to the best of my ability, while quite acknowledging that it is not *de fide* in the Eastern Church, and is not in all its details accepted by many of her children at the present day. Those who read my volume will gather from it that my sympathies are with the primitive school rather than the mediæval, but I think it a mistake to ignore the gulf that divides the one from the other, or to try and read into the documents of the Eastern Church a perfectly uniform teaching when it cannot be denied that ever since the Council of Florence there have been two schools—the one primitive in tone, the other tinged with mediæval Latinism. My own belief is that the more official documents of the Greeks represent the mediæval school. This is, I think, proved

by the modification of statements in the Russ version of the decree of the Synod of Bethlehem as to Transubstantiation, and in the eighteenth decree on the intermediate state. Dr. Neale, speaking of the omission in the Russ of some words in this latter decree, says, "This is clearly omitted by the Russian Church to avoid defining that there is a *local place* of punishment; as ποινὴ is changed to prevent the affirmation that this punishment is properly penal or expiatory" (see Neale's *History of the Holy Eastern Church*, General Introduction, vol. ii. p. 1177).

As the teaching of Macarius has been disputed, the following *résumé* of that part which refers to the disembodied soul may be useful. The reader is however urged to refer to the volume itself, if possible.

The *Théologie Dogmatique*, by Macarius (see p. 271), is based entirely upon the authoritative documents of the Eastern Church, such as the Decrees of the Synod of Bethlehem (or Jerusalem, as it is sometimes called) and the *Orthodox Confession* (see p. 270). His Eschatology occupies 186 pp. of vol. ii. (pp. 623–809). He begins with an account of the Particular Judgment, called the Télonies (douanes). This elaborate judgment, he says, is not to be taken quite literally but spiritually. "Nous devons nous représenter les télonies, non point dans un sens grossier et sensuel, mais, autant que possible, dans un sens spirituel" (p. 641). We must remember that the *particular* judgment is that in which each particular soul is judged at death, and not confuse it with the *general* judgment. Macarius then discusses the "retribution of the just after the particular judgment." He insists here—and repeatedly throughout the whole of this section—upon the fact that the departed are neither perfectly and completely rewarded nor punished until after the resurrection and *general* judgment, for the reason that the soul apart from the body is not the complete human

being. The resurrection of the body increases either the joy or sorrow of the soul. He continues, "Thus the Orthodox Church teaches a twofold retribution after the particular judgment: the one for the just, the other for sinners, although both are incomplete, not definitive."

The next section (§ 252) is headed, "*Retribution of the just:* 1° *Their glorification in heaven (dans le ciel), in the Church triumphant:* 2° *their glorification on earth in the Church militant. Veneration of the Saints.*" According to Macarius "the just" are those whom the Western Church would call either "saints" or "perfectly righteous." They are represented as passing straight to Heaven—the Church Triumphant. Macarius writes: "As to the place [where the just are] it is called both in Holy Writ and the writings of the Fathers 'Paradise' (Luke xxiii. 43), 'Abraham's Bosom' (Luke xvi. 22), 'the Kingdom of Heaven' (Matt. v. 3, 10; viii. 11), 'the Kingdom of God' (Luke xiii. 28, 29), 'the house of the heavenly Father' (John xiv. 2), 'the city of the living God,' 'the heavenly Jerusalem' (Heb. xii. 22; Gal. iv. 26)" (p. 646). He then says that any of these names may be employed if only it is always kept in mind that they mean *Heaven.* He says this because "a few writers make some distinction between Paradise, Abraham's Bosom, and Heaven itself." Macarius adopts no such distinction. He refers to it as a private opinion. "Some ancient doctors have thought that the souls of the just await the resurrection of the body not in Heaven, but strictly (proprement) in the bosom of Abraham, in Paradise, which they look upon only as the vestibule of Heaven. This is merely their private opinion . . . (c'était là chez eux une opinion particulière . . ." (p. 651).

Macarius says, "As to the felicity of the souls of the just in Heaven (dans le ciel), it differs doubtless according to the merit of each. Its characteristics are, to rest from labour

(Heb. iv. 3, 11; Rev. xiv. 13); . . . to be in relation and communion with innumerable companies of angels; to stand before the throne of the Lamb, to glorify and to serve Him; to live and reign with Jesus Christ (2 Tim. ii. 11, 12), and above all to see God 'face to face' (voir enfin Dieu 'face à face') (1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. v. 8; Heb. xii. 14)." He quotes St. Gregory the Theologian, who says the soul contemplates "the most pure and most perfect splendour of the Most High Trinity" (pp. 647–8). This seems very like the "Beatific Vision" of the Latin theologians, though, in speaking of the just both before and after the resurrection, Macarius does not ever, I think, use this expression. He does not teach that there is any more perfect vision of God after the resurrection than before, though he does, of course, as I have said, teach that the sight of God is a greater reward after the resurrection as it is then enjoyed by the *whole* man, not by the soul only. That by "the just" Macarius means chiefly the "saints" is clear, because he goes on to speak of "the just" as those whom the Church on earth venerates and invokes; in whose honour she builds churches, whose relics and images she esteems.

Having now briefly sketched what Macarius says of "the just" who pass straight to Heaven at their death, we turn to the section on the second of his two classes of souls, and find it is entitled, "*The retribution of sinners: 1° their punishment in Hades (l'enfer)*." He says, "The souls of sinners pass at once after death and the particular judgment into a place of sorrow and affliction. . . . Little can be said as to the place where these souls go, or as to their torments. The place is called in Holy Scripture and ancient authors by the following names: 'Hades' (l'enfer) (Luke xvi. 23; Acts ii. 31), the 'outer darkness' (Matt. xxii. 13, xxv. 30, 46), . . . 'the abyss' (Luke viii. 31) . . . '*Gehenna*' (Matt. v. 22, x. 28), 'the furnace of fire' (Matt. xiii. 50), and by other

names, all expressing the same idea, that of a place destined for the souls who have departed hence weighted with sins, the place of condemnation and divine wrath. As to the locality of Hades or Gehenna, there are only private opinions." He then goes on to speak of the torments of these sinners in Gehenna, and quotes an author who says that one of their griefs is "la vue continuelle du diable et sa société." The punishments in Hell vary, and "one may suppose there are in Hell (enfer) special abodes, prisons, or sections. One of these is called Hades, another Gehenna, a third Tartarus, a fourth *the lake of fire*." He again repeats that these torments are incomplete until the body shares in them. The souls of sinners are "in the company of the evil and damned spirits" (Ils sont dans la société des esprits malins, réprouvés) (p. 701).

This agrees with the *Orthodox Confession*, Question 68, "Where is the place of those souls who leave their bodies under the displeasure of God? Many names are given to that place. It is called Hades, unto which the Devil, when thrust out of Heaven, was driven. . . . To this place go down the souls of all those who die at enmity with God and under His wrath; and here they are damned." The original Greek is: Πρῶτον ὀνομάζεται ᾅδης, εἰς τὸν ὁποῖον ἀπωσθηκεν ὁ διάβολος. . . . Hades therefore in Greek theology is simply "Hell"—the place in which are the souls of all sinners, and the Devil and his angels.

After discussing this place, the opposite of Heaven, Macarius heads his next section (§258. 2°), "*Possibility, for certain sinners to obtain refreshment and even deliverance from the punishments of Hell* (*châtiments de l'enfer*), *by means of the prayers of the Church.*" He begins thus: "In teaching, however, that after death and the particular judgment all sinners pass equally into Hell, the place of grief and pain

(tous les pécheurs passent également dans l'enfer, séjour de tristesse et d'affliction), the Orthodox Church professes that for those who, before death, were penitent, but had no time to bring forth worthy fruits of repentance . . . there remains the *possibility* of obtaining a refreshment from pain, and even a complete escape from the chains of Hades." This they can obtain by no repentance, or merit of their own, but only by the prayers of the Church. Macarius suggests that the sufferings of the penitent may be less than those of the reprobate, and even that there may be in Hades "plusieurs demeures et des rétributions differentes," but he insists upon there being no distinct place in Hades for the penitent apart from the damned and the devils. Of such a distinct place he says, "Nous ne le saurions, parce que l'Église n'admet point d'état intermédiaire pour les âmes après la mort, point de troisième lieu entre le ciel et l'enfer ou la Géhenne," *i.e.* the Eastern Church, as I have said already (p. 396), admits no intermediate place such as Purgatory "between Heaven and Hades or Gehenna."

This Macarius repeats with emphasis in the next section on "Purgatory" (see p. 272 for quotation), and asserts that the chief difference between his Communion and the Church of Rome is on the doctrine of Purgatory being a place distinct from "Hell" (Gehenna), and upon the question of temporal punishment; the Easterns deny that temporal punishment is endured in Hades. After the resurrection Macarius teaches that the soul will receive an increase of joy or pain through its reunion with the body, and consequently until the resurrection man is not completely (*i.e.* as a whole) rewarded or punished. His *soul* is, however, before the resurrection either in Heaven—which is called by many names—or in Hell, which is called by many names. There is no intermediate place for souls.

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